













Engraved by S. Allen

The Art of being Happy.
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The
ART OF BEING HAPPY.



Hannah More

LONDON
WILLIAM DARTON AND SON,
HOLBORN HILL.

THE
ART OF BEING HAPPY;

CHIEFLY FROM

Les secrets de la vie heureuse par M. de La Rochefoucauld
The French of M. Droz.

BY

BOURNE HALL DRAPER.

A NEW EDITION.

1841

“ Seek not to be rich, but to be happy. The one lies in bags,
the other in content; which wealth can never give.”—W. PENN.

“ The mind that would be happy, must be great;
Great in its wishes, great in its surveys.”—YOUNG.

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The following is a list of the names of the persons who have been admitted to the membership of the Society since the last meeting of the Council, viz. at the meeting held on the 14th of January 1844. The names are given in the order in which they were admitted, and are preceded by the name of the person by whom they were recommended.

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PREFACE.

THE sentiments contained in the following pages are selected chiefly from a French work, by M. Droz, bearing the same title. The best parts of this publication, with a few of the thoughts of the American translator, which seemed most useful in their tendency, are here presented to the English reader.

To regard happiness as an art or science, is certainly by no means so common as it should be. Yet this is a proper view of the subject. No one was ever happy by chance; no one was ever happy without

much study, and labour, and care to be so. It is worthy of remark, that, however writers may differ in their sentiments on this topic, they all agree in one essential point, that happiness was never found without virtue and piety. This is a truth which should never be forgotten; a truth confirmed by the united testimony of all ranks, of all professions, and of all ages.

Our illustrious countrywoman, the late excellent Hannah More, has, in an interesting dramatic sketch, entitled “The Search after Happiness,” advanced many sentiments in full unison with those of the writer of this volume. Personifying Happiness, she says,

“She whom you seek inhabits yonder cell!
In her, united, worth and wisdom dwell!
Poor, not dejected; humble, yet not mean;
Cheerful, though grave; and lively, though serene;

Benevolent, kind, pious, gentle, just ;
Reason her guide, and Providence her trust.
If Heaven, indulgent to her little store,
Adds to that little but a little more,
With holy praise her grateful heart o'erflows,
And sweetly mitigates the sufferer's woes ;
Her labours for devotion best prepare,
And meek devotion smooths the brow of care."

The fair authoress assures us, that Happiness is never to be found in the haunts of dissipation, or in the absence of reflexion ;

"I tried the power of pomp and costly glare,
Nor e'er found room for thought, or time for prayer ;
In different follies every hour I spent ;
I shunn'd reflexion, yet I sought content.
My hours were shared betwixt the park and play,
And music served to waste the tedious day ;
Yet softer airs no more with joy I heard,
If any sweeter warbler was preferred ;
The dance succeeded, and succeeding tired ;
If some more graceful dancer were admired ;
No sounds but flattery ever sooth'd my ear ;
Ungentle truths I know not how to hear.
The anxious day induced the sleepless night,
And my vex'd spirit never knew delight."

Mrs. More affirms, that this distinguished boon, after which all are seeking, and which so few of our race comparatively find, is not to be found in the pursuit of fame or of science. She is also of opinion, that works of fiction tend to corrupt the heart, rather than to regulate the life, and procure happiness. Speaking of novels, she says,

‘ Their poisonous influence led my mind astray,
I sighed for something—what, I could not say :
I fancied virtues which were never seen,
And died for heroes who had never been ;
I sicken’d with disgust at sober sense,
And loath’d the pleasures worth and truth dispense ;
I scorn’d the manners of the world I saw ;
My guide was fiction, and romance my law.
I found adventures in each common tale,
And talked and sighed to every passing gale ;
A fancied heroine, an ideal wife,
I loath’d the offices of real life ;
Each duty to perform observant still,
But those which God and Nature bade me fill. ’

She denounces, in strong terms, the possibility of ease and indolence, to impart felicity. "The dire rust," she says, "of indolence corrodes ;"

"This eating canker, with malignant stealth,
Destroys the vital powers of moral wealth.
Seek action—'tis the scene which virtue loves ;
The vigorous sun not only shines but moves ;
From sickly thoughts with quick abhorrence start,
And rule the fancy, if you'd rule the heart."

Mrs. More is of opinion, that something besides display, fine clothes, and an elegant figure are essential to felicity ;

"The fairest symmetry of form or face,
From intellect receives its highest grace ;
The brightest eyes ne'er dart such piercing fires,
As when a soul irradiates and inspires ;
Beauty with reason need not quite dispense,
And coral lips may sure speak common sense."

In order to render life happy, she earn-

estly inculcates the greatest care in education

“ Know, then, that life’s chief happiness or woe,
From good or evil education flow ;
The yielding mind with virtue should be grac’d,
For first impressions seldom are effac’d ”

Association with the wise and good ; admiration of the works of God ; the pleasures of benevolence ; and, above all, a life of cheerful devotion, are mentioned by this useful writer as essential ingredients in the cup of happiness. She closes her little work with language, which all who are rightly informed and who would be happy, will delight to use ;

“ Fountain of Being ! teach us to devote
To Thee each purpose, action, word, and thought !
Thy grace our hope, thy love our only boast ;
Be all distinctions in the Christian lost !
Be this, in every state our wish alone,—
Almighty, wise, and good, Thy will be done ! ”

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THE
ART OF BEING HAPPY.

CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTION.

SOME will, perhaps, be ready, when they read the title of this volume, to regard its counsels with indifference, or even with disdain. They will indolently, and yet confidently, affirm, that the theoretical discussion of the pursuit of happiness is visionary and profitless ; that lecture, write, preach as we may, the future will be, perhaps ought to be, as the past ; that the world is always growing older without ever growing wiser ; and that men are evidently no more successful in their search after happiness now, than in the remotest periods of history. They will affirm, that man has always been the sport of accident, the slave of his passions, the creature of circumstances ; that it is useless to

reason, vain to consult rules, imbecile to surrender independence, to follow the guidance of those who assume to be wise, or receive instruction from those who have been taught by years. They will allege the utter inefficacy of the lights of reason, philosophy, and religion, judging from the little comparative illumination, which they have hitherto shed upon the paths of life. On the same ground, and from the same reasonings, they might declaim against every attempt, in every form, to render the world wiser and happier. With equal propriety they might say, "Close the pulpit, silence the press, cease from parental discipline, moral suasion, and the training of education. Do what you will, the world will go on as before." Who does not see the absurdity of such language? Because we cannot do every thing, shall we do nothing? Because the million float towards the invisible future without any pole-star, or guided only by the presumption of general opinion, is it a conclusive proof that none have been rendered happier in consequence of having followed wiser guidance, and pursued happiness by system?

Such is the practical creed of the great mass of society. I, on the contrary, think that this general persuasion is palpably false and fatal; that much suffering may be avoided, and much enjoyment obtained by following rules, and pursuing happiness

by system ; that I have had the fortune to meet with numbers, who were demonstrative proof that men may learn how to be happy. I am confident that the far greater portion of human suffering is of our own procuring, the result of ignorance and mistaken views, and that it is a superfluous and unnecessary mixture of bitterness in the cup of human life. I firmly believe that the greater number of deaths, instead of being the result of specific diseases, to which they are attributed, are really caused by a series of imperceptible malign influences, springing from corroding cares, griefs, and disappointments. To say, that more than half the human race die of sorrow, and a broken heart, or in some way fall victims to their depraved passions, may seem like advancing a revolting doctrine ; but it is, nevertheless, a simple truth.

We do not actually see the operations of grief upon some one or all the countless frail and delicate constituents of human life. But if physiology could look through the infinitely complicated web of our structure with the power of the solar microscope, it would behold every chagrin searing some nerve, paralyzing the action of some organ, or closing some capillary ; and that every sigh draws its drop of life-blood from the heart. Nature is slow in resenting her injuries ; but the memory of them is indelibly impressed, and treasured up for a late but

certain revenge. Nervousness, lowness of spirits, headache, and all the countless train of morbid and deranged corporeal and mental action, are at once, the cause and the effect of sorrow and anxiety, increased by a constant series of action and reaction. Thought and care become impressed upon the brow. The bland essence of cheerfulness evaporates. The head becomes shorn of its locks; and the frosts of winter gather on the temples. These concurrent influences silently sap the stamina of life; until, aided by some adventitious circumstance, death lays his hand upon the frame, that by the sorrows and cares of life was prepared for his dread office. The bills of mortality assign a name to the mortal disease different from the true one.

Cheerfulness and equanimity are about the only traits that have invariably marked the life of those who have lived to extreme old age. Nothing is more clearly settled by experience, than that grief acts as a slow poison, not only in the immediate infliction of pain, but in gradually impairing the powers of life, and in subtracting from the sum of our days.

If, then, by any process of instruction, discipline, and mental force, we can influence our circumstances, banish grief, create cheerfulness, we can, in the same degree, reduce rules, for the pursuit of happiness, to a system; and make that system a

matter of science. Can we not do this? The very million who deride the idea of seeking for enjoyment through the medium of instruction, unconsciously exercise the power in question to a certain extent; though not to the extent of which they are capable. All those wise individuals who have travelled with equanimity and cheerfulness through the diversified scenes of life, making the most of its good, and the least of its evils, bear a general testimony to the truth of this fact. We find in them a conviction that they had such power, and a force of character that enabled them to act according to their convictions.

No person deserves the name of a philosopher, who is not wise in relation to the great purpose of life. In the same proportion, then, as I can convince my readers, that by their own voluntary, physical and mental discipline, they can act upon circumstances, and influence their temperament, and thus bear directly upon their happiness, I shall be able to stir up their powers, and call forth their energy of character, to apply that discipline in their own case. In the same proportion I shall be instrumental in training them to the highest exercise of their reason, and the attainment of true philosophy.

The elements upon which we should operate, are circumstances, habits, and modes of thinking and

acting. The philosopher of circumstances, denies that you can act upon these. But, by his unwearied efforts to propagate his system, he proves that he does not himself act upon his avowed convictions. The impulse of all our actions from birth to death, the spring of all our movements, is a conviction that we can alter and improve our condition. We have a consciousness stronger than our reason, that we can control our circumstances. We can change our regimen and habits; and, by patience and perseverance, even our temperament. Every one can cite innumerable and most melancholy instances of those who have done it for evil. The habit of indulging in opium, tobacco, ardent spirits, or any of the pernicious narcotics, soon reduces the physical and mental constitution to that temperament, in which these stimulants are felt to be necessary. A corresponding change is produced in the mind and disposition. The frequent and regular use of medicine, though it may have been wholly unnecessary at first, finally becomes an inveterate habit. No phenomenon of physiology is more striking, than the facility with which the human constitution immediately commences a conformity to whatsoever change of circumstances, as of climate, habit, or aliment, we impose upon it. It is a most impressive proof, that the Creator has formed man capable of becoming the creature of all climates and conditions.

If we may change our temperament both of body and mind for evil, as innumerable examples prove that we may, why not also for good. Our habits certainly are under our control: and our modes of thinking, however little the process may have been explained, are, in some way, shaped by our voluntary discipline. We have powers of self-command, as every one who has made the effort to exercise them, must be conscious. We have inexhaustible moral force for self-direction, if we will only recognize and exert it. We owe most of our disgusts and disappointments, our corroding passions and unreasonable desires, our fretfulness, gloom and self-torment, neither to nature nor fate; but to ourselves, and our reckless indifference to those rules, that ought to guide our pursuit of happiness. Let a higher education and a truer wisdom detach us from our passions, dispel the mists of opinion, and silence the authority of example. Let us commence the pursuit of happiness on the right course, and seek it where alone it is to be found. Equanimity and moderation will shed their mild radiance upon our enjoyments; and in our reverses we shall summon resignation and force of character: and, according to the sublime ancient maxim, we shall, in some useful degree, become masters of events and of ourselves.

I am sensible that there will always be a

sufficient number of those, deemed philosophers, who, notwithstanding their rules, have wandered far from their aim. Such there will ever be, so long as there are stirring passions within, or hidden dangers around us; and there will be shipwrecks, so long as human cupidity and ambition tempt self-confident and unskilful mariners upon the fickle and tumultuous bosom of the ocean. But is this proof that a disciplined pilot would not be most likely to make the voyage in safety, or that the study of navigation is useless?

My affectionate desire is, to draw your attention to those moral resources which the Creator has placed at your command. How many millions have floated down the current in the indolent supineness of inactivity, who, had they been aware of their internal means of active resistance, would have risen above the pressure of their circumstances! Who can deny, that there is a manifest difference, even as things now are, between the moral courage of action and endurance, put forth by a disciplined and reflecting mind, possessing force of character, and the stupid and passive abandonment, with which a savage meets pain and death?

To encourage us to shake off the superincumbent load of indifference, ridicule, and opposition, and to make efforts to extend virtue and happiness, let us

reflect that a useful thought may outlive an empire. Babylon and Thebes are, now, nowhere to be found; but the moral lessons of the contemporary wise and good, despised and disregarded, perhaps, in their day, have descended to us and are still to be found. As the seminal principles of plants, borne through the wide spaces of the air by their downy wings, find at length a congenial spot, in which to settle down, and vegetate, these seeds of virtue and happiness, floating down the current of time, are still arrested, from age to age, by some kindred mind, in which they germinate, and produce their golden fruit. No intellect can conjecture, in how many instances, and to what degree, every fit moral precept may have come between the reason and passions of some one, balancing between the course of happiness and ruin, and may have inclined the scale in his favour. The consciousness of even an effort to achieve one such triumph is a sufficient satisfaction to a virtuous mind.

CHAPTER II.

THE PHYSICAL, ORGANIC, AND MORAL LAWS.

It is devoutly to be hoped that the time is rapidly approaching, when no one will be found who shall regard religion and philosophy as militant and irreconcilable principles. So far from their being in opposition, when rightly understood, they will be found resting on the same immutable foundation. A few of the misguided friends of piety may have sometimes attempted to represent them as separate and hostile interests; but it will one day be understood, that whatever wars with reason and common sense, is equally hostile to religion. The simple and unchangeable truths of Christianity will be found to violate none of our most obvious convictions. Truth will reassume her legitimate reign. Piety, religion, and morals, our best interests for this life, and our surest preparations

for a future one, will be found exactly conformable to the eternal order of things; when this is seen, the system of the gospel will become universal, according to its legitimate claims. True piety, in my mind, is equally our duty, our wisdom, and happiness. To behold God every where in his works, to hold communion with him in a contemplative and admiring spirit, to love and trust him, to find in the deep and constantly present persuasion of his being and attributes, a sentiment of exhaustless cheerfulness and excitement to duty, I hold to be the source of the purest and sublimest pleasure that earth can afford.

True philosophy unfolds the design of final causes with a calm and humble wisdom. It finds the Creator everywhere, and always acting in wisdom and power. It traces the highest benevolence of intention, where the first aspect showed no apparent purpose, or one that seemed to tend to misery; offering new inducements to learn the first and last lesson of religion, and the ultimate attainment of human wisdom, resignation to the will of God. In vindicating his ways to men, it declares that so long as we do not understand the laws of our being, and so long as we violate them, either ignorantly, wilfully, or even unconsciously, misery must certainly follow; and that the Omnipotent has forged every link of the chain that

connects our own unhappiness with every transgression of the laws of our nature.

We find ourselves making a part of an existing universe, which neither ignorance, nor wisdom, doubting, nor confidence can alter. If we know the order, of which we are the subjects, and conform to it, we are happy. If we ignorantly, or wilfully transgress it, the order is in no degree changed, or impeded. It moves irresistibly on, and the opposition is crushed. How wisdom and benevolence are reconcilable with the permission of this ignorance and opposition; in other words, why partial evil exists in God's universe, it is not my object to enquire. The enquiry would not only be fruitless, but would in no degree alter the fact, that what we call evil does exist. It is enough for us to know, that, as far as human research has reached, or can reach, the more profoundly we investigate the subject, the more clearly are design, wisdom, and benevolence discoverable. Beyond our discernment, right reason, guided by humility, would infer, that, where we cannot trace the impress of these attributes, it is not because they are not to be found, but because our powers are not equal to the discovery. If we had a broader vision, and were more fully acquainted with the relations of all parts of God's universe, the one to the other, and all the reasons of the permanent

ordinances of his government, we should be able to understand the necessity of partial evil to the general good ; we should understand, why it rains on the waste ocean, when drought consigns whole countries to aridity and desolation ; in a word, why ignorance, transgression, misery, and death, have a place in our system.

All that we now know is, that the natural laws of this system are universal, invariable, unbending ; that physical and moral tendencies are the same all over our world ; and we have every reason to believe, over all other worlds. Wherever moral beings keep in harmony with these laws, there is no instance in which happiness is not the result. Men never enjoy health, vigour, and felicity in disobedience to them. The whole infinite contrivance of every thing above, around, and within us, appears directed to certain benevolent issues ; and all the laws of nature are in perfect harmony with the whole constitution of man.

We shall not enter upon the subtle controversies of moral philosophers, as to the fundamental principle of moral obligation, whether it be expediency, the nature of things, or the will of God. In my view these are rather questions about words than things. The nature of things is a part of the will of God ; and expediency is conformity to this unchanging order. An action derives its moral

complexion from being conformed to the will of God, and the nature of things ; and whatever is so conformed, is expedient ; consequently, all the different foundations of morals, when examined, are found to be precisely the same.

My notions of morality are, that it is conformity to the physical, organic, and moral laws of the universe. Some will choose to call it expediency ; others, the will of God ; and others still, the constitution of things. These views, when reduced to their elements, are the same, call them by what names we may. We may obviously divide these laws into three classes. The first series we call physical laws, or those which act upon the material universe, and upon ourselves as a part of that universe. The second we call organic, or those which regulate the origin, growth, well-being, and dissolution of organized beings. The last, denominated moral, act chiefly on the intellectual universe. They are founded on our relations to the great family of being, and to God.

We infer from analogy, that these laws always have been, are, and always will be, invariably the same ; and that they prevail alike in every portion of God's universe. We so judge, because we believe the existing order of things to be the wisest and the best. We know that the physical laws actually do prevail alike in every part of our world,

and as far beyond it, as the highest helps of astronomy can aid our researches into the depths of immensity. It is not probable, that if we could investigate the system, as far as the utmost stretch of thought, we should find any point, where the laws of gravity, light, heat, and motion do not prevail ; where the sentient beings are not restricted to the same moral relations, as in our world ! Wherever the empire of science has extended, we note these laws equally prevalent, in an atom and a world, and from the lowest order of beings up to a man. The arrangement of the great whole, it should seem, must be a single emanation from the same wisdom and will, perfectly uniform throughout the whole empire. What an impressive motive to study these laws, and conform to them, is it, to know, that they are as irresistible as the divine power, as universal as the divine presence, as permanent as the divine existence ; that there is no evading them, that no art can disconnect misery from transgressing them ; that no change of place or time, that not death, nor any transformation which our conscious being can undergo, will, during the revolutions of eternity, dispense any more with the necessity of observing these laws, than during our present transitory existence.

I need not dwell a moment upon the proofs of the absolute identity of the physical laws. No one

need be told, that a ship floats, water descends, heat warms, and cold freezes, and that all physical properties of matter are the same over the globe. We shall only show by a few palpable examples, that our system is arranged in conformity to the organic laws. Every discovery in the kingdom of animated nature develops new instances.

In the tropical regions, the muscular energy is less, in proportion as the natural fertility of the soil is greater. In colder latitudes muscular energy is increased; and ruder elements and a more sterile nature, proportion their claims accordingly. In arctic regions no farinaceous food ripens. Sojourners in that climate find, that bread and vegetable diet do not furnish the requisite nutriment; that pure animal food is the only sustenance that will there maintain the tone of the system, imparting a delightful vigor and buoyancy of mind. Strange as it may seem, to conform to this necessity, these dreary countries abound in infinite numbers and varieties of animals, fowls and fishes. The climate favours the drying and preserving of animal food, which is thus prepared to sustain the inhabitants, when nature imprisons the material creation in chains of ice, and wraps herself up in her mantle of snow. Thus, if we survey the whole globe, the food, climate and other circumstances will be found accommodated to the inhabitants;

and they, as far as they conform to the organic laws, will be found adapted to their climate and mode of subsistence.

In all positions man finds himself called upon, by the clear indications of the organic laws, to take that free and cheerful exercise, which is calculated to develop vigorous muscular, nervous and mental action. The peasant digs, and the hunter chases for subsistence; but finds at the same time health and cheerfulness. The penalty of the violation of this organic law by the indulgence of indolence is debility, enfeebled action, both bodily and mental, dyspepsia with all its painful train, and finally death. On the other hand, the penalty of over exertion, debauchery, intemperance, and excess of every species, comes in other forms of disease and suffering. These laws though not so obviously and palpably so, are as invariable and inevitable, as those of attraction, or magnetism; and yet the great mass of our species, even in what we call enlightened and educated countries, do not recognize, and obey them. It is in vain for them, that, from age to age, the same consequences have ensued, as the heralds of the divinity, proclaiming to all people, in all languages, that his laws carry their sanctions with them. One of our most imperious duties, then, is to study these laws, to make ourselves conversant with their bearing upon our

pursuit of happiness, that we may conform to them. When we have become acquainted with their universality and resistless power, we shall indulge no puerile hope that we may enjoy the present gratification of infringing them, and then evade the ultimate consequences. We shall as soon calculate to change condition with the tenants of the air and the waters, as expect to divert any one of them from its onward course.

He then is wise, who looks round him with a searching eye to become fully possessed, without the colouring of sophistical wishes, and self-deceiving expectation, of the actual conditions of his being; and who, instead of imagining, that the unchangeable courses of nature will conform to him, his ignorance, interests or passions, shapes his course so as to conform to them. He will no more expect, for example, that he can indulge his appetites, give scope to his passions, and yield himself to the seductions of life, and escape without a balance of misery in consequence, than he would calculate to throw himself unhurt, from a mountain precipice.

So far as regards himself, he will study the organic laws, in reference to their bearing upon his mind, his health, his morals, his happiness. He will strive to be cheerful; for he knows that it is a part of the constitution of things, that

cheerfulness tends to physical and mental health. He will accustom himself to exercise, and will avoid indolence, because he understands that he was formed to be an active being, and that he cannot yield to his slothful propensities, without forfeiting the delightful feeling of energy, and the power to operate upon events, instead of being passively borne along by them. He will be active, that he may be conscious of power. He will rise above the silent and invisible influence of sloth, and will exult in a feeling of force and self-command, for the same reasons that the eagle loves to soar aloft, and look upon the sun; because a sensation of power, and a sublime liberty are enjoyed in the flight. He will be temperate in the gratification of his appetites and passions, because he is aware, that every excessive indulgence strikes a balance of suffering against him, which he must discharge sooner, or later; and helps to forge a chain of habit, that will render it more difficult for him to resist the next temptation to indulgence. He will rise early from sleep, because nature calls him to early rising, in all her cheerful voices, in the matin song of birds, the balmy morning freshness and elasticity of the air, and the renovated cry of joy from the whole animal creation. He will do this, because he has early heard complaints from all sides of the shortness of life, and because he is

sensible, that he who rises every day two hours before the common period, will prolong the ordinary duration of life by adding six years of the pleasantest part of existence. He will rise early, because, next to the intemperate, no human being offers a more unworthy spectacle, than is presented by the man, who calls himself rational and immortal, who sees before him a greater amount of knowledge, duty and happiness, than he could hope to compass in a thousand years; and who yet turns himself indolently from side to side, during the hours of the awakening of nature, enjoying only the luxury of a savage or a brute, in a state of dozing existence little superior to the dreamless sleep of the grave. I test the character of a youth, of whom I wish to entertain hope, by this criterion. If he can nobly resist his propensities, if he can act from reason against his inclinations, if he can trample indolence under foot, if he can always make the effort to show the intellectual in the ascendant over the animal being, I note him as one, who will be worthy of eminence, whether he attain it or not. In a word, there is something of dignity and intellectual grandeur in the aspect of the young, who live in obedience to the organic and moral laws, which commands at once that undefined, and almost unconscious estimation and respect, which all minds involuntarily pay to true greatness.

When the young reach that period, when it is proper to assume the obligations of settled life, this conformity to the nature of things will cause them to pause, and reflect on what is before them, and will interdict them from following the inconsiderate throng, in entering into that decisive condition, consulting no other lights, than a morbid fancy, those impulses which are common to all other animals, or sordid calculations of interest. They perceive at a glance, that those who with such views take on them the obligations of the conjugal state, have no right to hope any thing better than satiety, ill-humour, monotonous disgust, and the insupportable imprisonment of two persons, in intimate and indissoluble partnership, who find weariness and penance in being together, who are reminded, at once by the void in their hearts, and their mutual inability to fill it, that they must not only endure the pain of being chained together, but feel, that they are thus barred from a happier union; partly by shame, partly by public opinion, and more than all, by the obstacles, wisely thrown by all civilized nations in the way of obtaining divorce. There can be no doubt, that the common views of the universal unhappiness of the wedded state in all Christian countries are the result of gross exaggeration. Making all allowances for errors from this source, language is too feeble, to

delineate the countless and unutterable miseries, that, in all time since the institution of marriage, as recognized by Christianity, have resulted from these incompatible unions, for the simple reason, that, in this transaction, of so much more moment than almost any other, scarcely one of the parties in a thousand, it is believed, takes the least note of of it in relation to the organic and moral laws. The young and the aged, the feeble and the strong, the healthy and the diseased, the beautiful and the deformed, the mild and the fierce, the intellectual and the purely animal, the rich and the poor, bring their incompatibilities to a common stock, add ruinous excesses of temperament together, and arouse from a short trance to the conscious and sober sadness of waking misery. Weariness and discontent, relieved only by domestic discord, and a wretchedness aggravated by the consciousness that there is no escape from it, but by death, is the issue of a union consummated under illusive expectations of more than mortal happiness. What multitudes have found this to be the reality of their youthful dreams ! Yet, if this most important union is contracted under animal impulses, without any regard to moral and intellectual considerations, without any investigation of the organic and social fitness of the case, without enquiry into the compatibility, without a mutual understanding of dis-

positions and habits ; who cannot foresee, that the affections will soon languish in satiety ; that repentance, disaffection, and even loathing, in proportion to the remembered raptures for ever passed away, will open the eyes of the parties to their real and permanent condition, and that by a law as certain and inevitable, as that which propels water down a precipice ! And this is not the darkest shade in the picture. By the same laws children are born, who advance into life to repeat the errors of their parents, to make common stock of their misery anew, to multiply the number of the unhappy ; or, perhaps worse, to tenant hospitals, and the receptacles of human ignorance and misery.

Study then, and obey the moral laws of the universe, of which you are a part, because you are moral beings, and because obedience to these laws constitutes the tie of affinity between you, the higher orders of being, and the Divinity. Respect these laws, because it is the glory of your nature, that you alone, of all creatures below, are morally subject to them. Laying out of the question their momentous sanctions in the eternal future, you must be aware, that the Creator has annexed pleasure to obeying them, and pain to their violation as inevitably, as gravity belongs to matter. One would think, it must be enough to determine the conduct of a being, who laid claim to the character

of rational, to know, that no art nor dexterity, that no repentance nor return to obedience, can avert the consequences of a single violation of these laws; and that no imaginable present good can counterbalance the future misery, that must accrue in consequence.

With regard, for example, to the practice of the most common and every day duties, who can doubt the truth of the trite adage, *Honesty is the best policy*? This is, in effect, no more than saying, that the moral laws of the universe are constituted upon such principles, as to make it every man's interest to obey them. It is as certain, that they are so constituted, as that fire will burn, or water drown you; and when you understand this constitution, it marks the same want of a sane mind to violate them, as to be unable to keep out of these elements. Yet the greater portion of the species do not constantly act upon a full belief in this hacknied maxim. They think apparently, that they can in some way obtain the imagined advantage of dishonesty and evade the connected evil, not aware, that detection and diminished confidence may be avoided, for once or twice; but not the loss of self-respect, the pureness and integrity of internal principle, the certainty of forging the first link in a chain of bad habits, and a thousand painful consequences, which it would be easy to enumerate

in detail. Almost every one deems that he may safely put forth every day false compliment, double-dealing, deception on a small scale, and little frauds, not cognisable by any law or code of honor. In a word, if actions are a test of the sincerity of conviction, very few really are convinced that *honesty is the best policy*.

We hold the man insane who should leap from a high building upon the pavement, or attempt to grapple with the blind power of the elements. But it is scarcely the subject of our remark, that the multitude about us, in the most important, as well as the minutest concerns of life, live in habitual recklessness or violation of the organic and moral laws; and yet we certainly know, that whoever infringes them is as sure to pay the penalty, as he who madly places himself in opposition to the material laws. I can never present this astonishing and universal blindness in too many forms of repetition, if the effect is to bring you to view these two species of folly in the same light.

The reason clearly is, that in too many instances, men take no pains to acquaint themselves with these laws, and their bearing upon the constitution of man; or, deceived by the clamours of the inclinations, and the illusions of present pleasure and advantage, when balanced with future and remote penalties, they commit the infractions, and hope,

that between the certain pleasure and the distant and contingent pain, they can interpose some evasion, and sever the consequences from the fault. The expectation always ends, like the alchymist's dream, and the projector's perpetual motion. Even in the apprehension of the consequences, the mind is paying the penalty of an unquiet conscience, and of an abatement of self-confidence, and self-respect, penalties, which very few earthly pleasures can compensate.

When I speak of these unchangeable laws, as emanations from the divine wisdom and goodness, as transcripts of the divine immutability, and as being the best of all possible arrangements, not to be superseded or turned from their course by the wisest of beings, I by no means wish to find fault with the consoling and scriptural doctrine of providence. I firmly believe, and trust in it; not, however, in the popular view. It would not increase my veneration for the Almighty, to suppose that his laws required exceptions and variations, to meet particular cases; nor that they would call for frequent suspensions and changes, to provide for contingencies not foreseen at the commencement of the mighty movements. Such are not the grounds of my trust in the wisdom and goodness of the Supreme Being. I neither desire, nor expect any deviation of laws, as wise and good as they can

be, in their general operation, to meet my particular wishes, or those of the friends most dear to me. I expect, that none of the powers of nature will change for me; I encourage no insane hopes, that things will forego their tendencies to meet my conveniences or pleasures. Prayer is a duty equally comforting and elevating; but my prayers are not, that these fixed laws of the divine wisdom may change for me; but that I may understand and conform to them. The providence, in which I believe, supposes no exceptions, infringements, or violations of the universal plan of the divine government. Miracles only seem such to us, because we see but a link or two in the endless chain of that plan. An ingenuous mechanic constructs a clock, which will run many years, and only once in the whole period strike an alarm bell. It is a miracle to those who comprehend not, that it was part of the original plan of the mechanic. May we not with more probability adopt the same reasoning, in relation to the recorded miracles, as parts of the original plan of the Eternal?

Piety, established upon a knowledge of these laws, and a respect for them, and associated with veneration for their Author, is rational, consistent, firm, and manly. It seeks, it expects nothing, in the puerile presumption, that the ordinances of

heaven fitted for the whole system of the Creator, will be wrested to the wants of an insect. In docility and meekness it labours for conformity to those ordinances; in other words, to the divine will. It violates no principle, and calls for the exercise of no faith that is repugnant to the dictates of common sense, and the teaching of common observation. Piety, founded on such views, abides the scrutiny of the severest investigation. No vacillation of the mind from varying fortunes, no questionings of unbelief, doubt, and despair can shake it. It rests firmly on the basis of the divine attributes. It holds fast to the golden chain, the last link of which is riveted to the throne of the Eternal. Yet it is delightful to reflect, that the merciful arrangements of the Most High extend to the minute no less than the great. An infallible authority has assured us, that "not a sparrow falleth to the ground without our heavenly Father."

Thus it seems to me indispensable, as a prerequisite to the pursuit of happiness, that the enquirer should examine the physical and moral laws; that he should carefully investigate their whole bearing upon his constitution; that he should trace all their influences on him from the first hour in which he opens his eyes on the light,

to his departure out of life. I insist the more earnestly upon this, because in these days the study of the moral relations of things seems to me comparatively abandoned. The exact and natural sciences are studied, rather, it would seem, as an end, than a means. Natural philosophy, mathematics, and astronomy may be highly useful; but who will compare these sciences, in regard to their utility and importance, with those which guide the mind to their Author, which teach the knowledge of his moral laws, which instruct us how to allay the passions, to moderate our expectations, and to establish morality on the basis of our regard to our own happiness?

If, then, you would give yourself to the patient study of the natural sciences, that you may gain reputation and the ability to be useful, much more earnestly will you study regimen, exercise, temperance, moderation, cheerfulness, the benefits of a balanced mind, and of a wise and Christian conformity to an order of things, not a tittle of which you can change, that you may be resigned, useful, and happy. All knowledge which cannot be turned to this account, either as relates to yourself or others, is useless.

Some part, then, of each day, should be dedicated by every individual in health, to the exercise

of his nervous and muscular systems, in labour calculated to give scope to these functions. The reward of obeying this requisite of his nature would be health, and a joyous animal existence; the punishment of neglect is disease, low spirits, and death.

Some part should also be spent in the sedulous employment of the knowing and reflecting faculties; in studying the qualities of external objects, and their relations; also the nature of all animated beings, and their relations; not with the view of accumulating mere abstract and barren knowledge, but of enjoying the positive pleasure of mental activity, and of turning every discovery to account, as a means of increasing happiness, or alleviating misery. The leading object should always be to find out the relationship of every object of our own nature, organic, animal, moral, and intellectual, and to keep that relationship habitually in mind, so as to render our acquirements directly gratifying to our various faculties. The reward of this conduct would be an incalculably great increase of pleasure, in the very act of acquiring knowledge of the real properties of external objects, together with a great accession of power in reaping ulterior advantages, and in avoiding disagreeable affections.

And some of our time ought to be devoted to

the cultivation and gratification of our moral sentiments; that is to say, in exercising these in harmony with the intellect, and especially in acquiring the habit of admiring, loving, and yielding obedience to the Creator and his institutions. This last object is of vast importance. Intellect is barren of practical fruit, however rich it may be in knowledge, until it is fired and prompted to act by moral sentiment. In my view, knowledge by itself is comparatively worthless and impotent, compared with what it becomes when vivified by virtuous emotions. It is not enough that intellect is informed; the moral faculties must simultaneously co-operate; yielding obedience to the precepts which the intellect recognizes to be true. One way of cultivating these sentiments would be for men to meet and act together, on the fixed principles which I am now endeavouring to unfold, to help each other in mutual instruction, and in united adoration of the great and glorious Creator. The reward of acting in this manner would be a communication of direct and intense pleasure to each other; for I refer to every individual who has ever had the good fortune to pass a day or an hour with a really benevolent, pious, honest, and intellectual man, whose soul swelled with adoration of his Creator, whose intellect was replenished with

knowledge of his works, and whose whole mind was instinct with sympathy for human happiness, whether such a day did not afford him the most pure, elevated, and lasting gratification he ever enjoyed. Such an exercise, besides, would invigorate the whole moral and intellectual powers, and fit them to discover and obey the divine institutions.

CHAPTER III.

GENERAL VIEWS OF HAPPINESS.

MAN is created to be happy. His desires and the wisdom of the Creator concur to prove the assertion. Yet the earth resounds with the complaints of the unhappy, although they are encompassed with the means of enjoyment, of which they appear to know neither the value nor the use. They resemble the shipwrecked mariner, on a desert isle, surrounded with fruits, of the properties of which he is ignorant, as he is doubtful whether they offer nourishment or poison.

I was early impelled to investigate the character and motives of the crowd around me, eagerly rushing forward in pursuit of happiness. I soon noted multitudes relinquishing the chase in indolent despondency, who affirmed, that they no longer

believed in the existence of the boon. I felt an insatiate craving, and saw life through the illusive colouring of youth. Unwilling to resign my hopes, I enquired of others, who seemed possessed of greater strength of mind, and more weight of character, if they could guide me to the place of happiness? Some answered with an ill-concealed smile of derision, and others with bitterness. They declared, that in their view the pleasures of life were more than counterbalanced by its pains. Because they were disappointed and discouraged, they deemed that their superior wisdom had enabled them to strip off the disguises of life, and contemplate it with sullen resignation.

Man was made to be happy! How is this? Look at yonder town; besides spires and mansions, I see hovels, poor, blind, lame, profligate youth, and imbecile age; and even in the abodes of external comfort and opulence, the sick and dying hanging in agonies of suspense upon the countenances of their physician and friends, as they catch gleams of hope or shades of despair from their aspect. Many of these sick, even if they recover, will only be restored to trembling age, to perpetual and incurable infirmity, and to evils worse than death. Yet, unhappy in living, and afraid to die, they cling to this wretched existence, as though it were the highest boon. These varied

shades of misery that the picture before me will present to the slightest inspection, in ten thousand forms and combinations, are visible in every part of our world. I, too, the observer may add, shall soon add to the deepness of the shading. My friends will depart in succession; and in my turn, on the bed of death, I shall thus look in the faces of those most dear to me, as I am compelled to depart out of life. What an affecting contrast with what I see and what I am!

Why there is this partial evil in the world is not a question which I shall here attempt to solve; for I could add nothing to what has already been said upon the subject. It is enough that the evil does actually exist. Is it remediless? Can life be so spent as to leave a balance of enjoyment set over against the evil? These are my questions. There will always be inequality, ignorance, vice, disease, a measureless amount of misery and death. What portions of the evils of life can be cured? What portion must be manfully, and piously endured? What transient gleams of joy can be made to illumine the depth of shade?

I remarked others in high places, whose restless activity and brilliance dazzled the multitude and inspired envy. I eagerly asked of them the secret of happiness. Too proud and self-satisfied to dissemble, they made little effort to conceal their

principles. I saw their hearts contracted by the vileness of egotism, and devoured with insatiate ambition. A faithful scrutiny, which penetrated beyond their dazzling exterior, showed me the righteous reaction of their principles, and convinced me that they suffered according to their deserts.

Weary and disheartened, I left them, and repaired to the class of stern and austere moralists. They represented the world to me as a melancholy and mysterious valley, through which the sojourner passes, groaning on his way to the grave. Their doctrines inspired me at once with sadness and terror. I soon resumed the elastic confidence of youth, and replied, "I will never believe that the Author of my being, who has implanted in my heart such pure and tranquil pleasures, who has rendered man capable of chaste love, and of friendship in its sanctity, who has formed us innocent before we could practise virtue, and who has connected the salutary bitterness of repentance with errors, has unalterably willed our misery."

Thence I passed to the opposite extreme, and accosted a gay and dissipated throng, whose deportment showed that they had found the object of my pursuit. I discovered them to be fickle by character, and vacillating from indifference. They had only escaped the errors of the moralists, by

substituting, in place of their austere maxims, enjoyments without any regard to consequences. I asked them to point me to happiness. Without comprehending the import of my question, they offered me participation in their pleasures. But I saw them prodigal of life, dissipating years in a few days, and reserving the remnant of their existence for unavailing repentance.

In view of so many observations, I abandoned the idea of guiding my researches by the counsels of others; and began to enquire for the secret in my own bosom. I heard the multitude around me complaining, in disappointment and discouragement. I resolved, that I would not commence the pursuit of happiness by servilely following in their beaten path. I determined to reflect, and patiently investigate a subject of so much moment. I detected at once the error of the common impression, that pleasure and happiness are the same. The former, fickle and fleeting, assumes forms as various as human caprice; and its most attractive charm is novelty. The object which gives it birth to-day, ceases to please, or inspires disgust to-morrow. The perception of happiness is not thus changeable and transient. It creates the consciousness of an existence so tranquil and satisfying, that the longer we experience it, the more we desire to prolong its duration.

Another mistaken, though common impression is, that the more profoundly we reflect, and make the pursuit of happiness a study, the less we shall be likely to enjoy. This is an error not only in regard to happiness, but even pleasure. If it be innocent, and exempt from danger,—to analyze it and reason upon it, so far from diminishing, prolongs the delight, and renders it higher. Without reflection we only skim its surface; we do not penetrate, and enjoy it.

Let us observe the few who have acquired the wisdom to enjoy that existence which the multitude waste. In their festal unions of friendship, let us mark the development of their desire to multiply the happy moments of life. By what ingenious and pleasant discussions do they heighten the charms of their condition! With what delicacy of tact do they analyze their enjoyments, to taste them with a more prolonged and exquisite relish! With what skill do they discipline themselves sometimes to efface the images of the future, that nothing may embitter, or distract their relish of the present; and sometimes to invoke remembrances and hopes, to impart to it still brighter embellishments!

Contrary to the prevalent impression, I, therefore, deem that, to reflect much upon it, is one of the wisest means in the pursuit of happiness. The

first analysis of reflection, it is true, dispels the charm with which youth invests existence. It forces the conviction upon us, that the pleasures of life are less durable, and its forms more numerous and prolonged than we had anticipated. The first result of the process is discouragement. But, as we continue to reflect, objects change their aspect a second time. The evils which at the first glance seemed so formidable, lose a portion of their terrific semblance; and the fleeting pleasures of existence receive new attractions from their analogy to human weakness.

They mistake, too, who suppose that the art on which I write has never been taught. The sages of Greece investigated the science of happiness as eloquently and profoundly, as they studied the other sciences. They wisely held the latter in estimation only so far as they were subservient to the former. In all succeeding ages there have arisen a few thinking men, who have regarded all their faculties, their advantages of nature and fortune, their studies and acquirements, not as ends in themselves, but as means conducive to the right pursuit of happiness.

So long a period has elapsed since this has been a subject of investigation, that when the opinion is advanced that this pursuit may be successfully conducted by system, its rules reduced to an art,

and thus become assimilated to those of the other arts, most men are utterly incredulous. No truth however, is more simple. To attain to a knowledge of the rules, it is only requisite, as in the other arts, that there should be natural dispositions for the study, favourable circumstances, and an assiduous investigation of the precepts.

The influence of fortunate dispositions for this study is chiefly discernible in men of marked and energetic character. Some are endowed by nature with such firmness and force of character, that misfortune cannot shake them. It slides, if I may so speak, over the surface of their stoical hearts, and the shock of adversity inspires them almost with a sort of pleasure, calling forth the conscious feeling of power and independence for resistance. But we observe the greater number shrinking from affliction, and even images of sadness, enjoying the present without apparent consciousness, and forgetting the past without regret. Always fickle and frivolous, they evade suffering by recklessness and gaiety. The most perfect organization for happiness imparts at the same time great force to resist the pains of life, and keen sensibility to enjoy its pleasures. I am aware that great energy and quick sensibility are generally supposed to be incompatible qualities; I have, nevertheless, often seen them united. I could lay down precepts, by

which to obtain the combination. By a more perfect education, it is hoped that, in future, this union may become general.

I yield entire faith to the doctrine, that, estimate these evils as highly as you may, a balance of enjoyment may still be struck in favour of life. I do not doubt, that more than one half the suffering and sorrow which every individual endures is simply of his own procuring, and not only that it might have been wholly avoided, but that positive enjoyment might have been substituted in its place. An inconceivable mass of misery would at once be struck from the sum, if, as I have already remarked, we knew the physical, organic and moral laws of our being, and conformed ourselves to them. A uniform, consistent and thorough education would cure us of innumerable errors of opinion, injurious habits, and a servile conformity to established prejudices; and would impart to us wisdom, force of character, and resignation, to enable us to sustain as we ought, those that are unavoidable. Imperfection, pain, decay, and death, among the inevitable events pertaining to organized beings, would remain. The dignity of true philosophy, the stern consciousness of the necessity of courage, profound and filial submission to the divine will, and the well-defined hopes of religion, would accomplish the remainder.

This classification of the great divisions of our species, as they are occupied in the pursuit of happiness, seems to me both happy and just. The disappointed, who affirm that the earth offers no happiness; the gloomy, who view life as a place of penance, austerity, and tears; the dissipated and voluptuous, who seek only pleasure, and whose doctrine is, that life offers no happiness but in unbridled indulgence; the ambitious, who consider happiness to consist only in wealth, power and distinction; and a very numerous class, who have no object in view, but to vegetate through life by chance, constitute the great mass of mankind. The number of those who have lived by system, and disciplined themselves to the wise and calculating pursuit of happiness, has always been small. But there have still been some, enough to prove the practicability of the art. Wherever we find a person, who declares that he has lived happily, if his enjoyments have been of a higher kind, than the mere vegetative easiness of a felicitous temperament, and an unthinking joyousness, we shall find on enquiry, that he has been a philosopher in the highest and best sense. He may scarcely understand the import of the term; but, however ignorant of systems, and the learning of the schools, if he have made it his chief business, to learn by the study of himself, and general observa-

tion, how to be happy, he is the true sage. He may well be content, let others regard him as they may; for he has put in requisition the best wisdom of life. No one maxim, especially, ever included more important and practical truth, than that, to be happy, we must assiduously train ourselves to retain through life a keen and juvenile freshness of sensibility to enjoyment; and must early learn to anticipate the effect of experience and years in cultivating a stern indifference, a strong spirit of endurance, and unshrinking obtuseness to pain.

Perhaps some will ask, if he who thus assumes to teach the art of happiness has himself learned to be constantly happy? Endowed with a moderate share of philosophy, and aided by favourable circumstances, I have thus far found the pleasures of life greatly overbalancing its pains. But who can hope for felicity without alloy? I would not conceal that I have had my share of inquietudes and regrets; and I have sometimes forgotten my principles. I resemble the pilot, who gives lessons upon his art after more than one shipwreck.

CHAPTER IV.

OUR DESIRES.

WHENCE are our most common sufferings? From desires which surpass our ability to satisfy them. Fabulous story relates, that a superior being appeared to a virtuous man, and said, "Form a wish, and I will grant it;" "Source of light," replied the sage, "I only wish to limit my desires by those things, which nature has rendered indispensable."

Let us not suppose, however, that a negative happiness, a condition exempt from suffering, is the most fortunate condition to which we may aspire. They who contend for this gloomy system, have but poorly studied the nature of man. If he errs in desiring positive enjoyments, if his highest aim ought to be, to live free from pain, the caves of the forest conceal those happy beings whom we ought to choose for our models.

Bounded by the present, animals sleep, eat, procreate, live without inquietude, and die without regret: and this is the perfection of negative happiness. Man, it is true, loses himself in vain projects. His long remembrances, create him suffering in reference to the past, and his keen foresight pains him in prospect of the future. His imagination brings forth errors; his liberty, crimes. But the abuse of his faculties does not disprove their excellence. Let him consecrate aright that time which he has hitherto lost in mourning over their aberrations, and he will have reason to be grateful to the Creator, for having given him the most exalted rank among sublunary beings. If, on the other hand, he chooses to abandon that rank, in which he ought to rejoice, he will degrade his immortal nature at his own cost; and will only add to his other evils the shame of wishing to render himself vile.

Let us examine those animals, the instincts of which have the nearest relation to intelligence. Not one of them takes possession of the paternal heritage, increases it, and transmits it to posterity. Man alone does this, improves his condition and his kind, and in this is essentially distinct from all other beings below. From the Eternal to man, and from man to animals, the chain is twice broken.

For man, the absence of suffering and a negative happiness, are not sufficient. His noble faculties refuse the repose of indifference. Created to aspire to whatever may be an element of enjoyment, let him cherish his desires, and let them indicate to him the path of happiness; too fortunate, if they do not entice him towards objects, which retire in proportion as he struggles to attain them, and towards those imaginary joys, of which the deceitful possession is more fertile in regrets than in pleasures.

Far from being the austere censor of desires, I admit, that they often produce charming illusions. What loveliness have they not spread over our spring of life! Our imagination at that time, as brilliant and as vivid as our age, embellished the whole universe, and every position in which our lot might one day place us. We were occupied with errors; but they were happy errors; and to desire was to enjoy.

Those enchanting dreams, which hold such a delightful place in the life of every man, whose imagination is gay and creative, spring from our desires. Ingenious fictions! Prolific visions! While ye cradle us, we possess the object of our magic reveries. Real possession may be less fugitive. But does it not also often vanish like a dream?

Wherever civilized man has been found, the first effort of his mind, beyond the attainment of his animal wants, has been to travel into the regions of imagination, to create a nobler and more beautiful world than the dull and common-place existing one; to assign to man a higher character and purer motives than belong to the actual race. To possess a frame inaccessible to pain and decay, and to dwell in eternal spring, surrounded by beauty and truth, is an instinctive desire. A mind of any fertility can create and arrange such a scene; and in this dreaming occupation the sensations are tranquillizing and pleasant, beyond the more exciting enjoyment of actual fruition. Truly, I cannot deem the propensity for this sort of meditation, either unworthy in itself, or as tending to consequences to be deprecated. So far as my own experience goes, and I am not without my share, it neither enervates nor satiates. It furnishes enjoyment that is calm and soothing; and such enjoyment, instead of enfeebling, invigorates the mind to sustain trials and sorrows. Why should we not enter into every enjoyment that is followed by no painful consequences? Why should we not be happy when we may? Is he not innocently employed, who is imagining a fairer scene, a better world, more benevolence and more joy than this "visible diurnal sphere" affords?

Addison is never presented to me in a light so amiable as when he relates his day-dreams, his universal empire, in which he puts down all folly and all wickedness, and makes all his personages good and happy.

Doubtless there are dangers blended with these seductive imaginings. In leaving the region of illusion, the greater part of men look with regret upon the abodes of reality, in which they must henceforward dwell. Let us not share their gloomy weakness. Let us learn to enjoy the moments of error, and perpetuate and renew them by remembrance. Children only are allowed to weep, when the waking moment annihilates the toys, of which a dream had given them possession.

We give ourselves up to illusions without danger, if we have formed our reason; if we wisely think, that the situation where our lot has placed us may have advantages which no other could offer. Imagination embellishes some hours without troubling any. Prompt to yield to the delightful visions, there are few of which I have not contemplated the charm. In seeing them vanish like a fleeting dream, I look round on my wife and children, and believe that I am remembered by a few friends. I open my heart to the pleasures of my retreat, which, though simple, are ever new. As the gilded creations of imagination disappear,

I smile at my creative occupation, and console myself with the consciousness, that fancy can paint nothing brighter or more satisfying than these my realities.

But let me hasten to make an important distinction to prevent the semblance of contradiction. Let me discriminate those fleeting desires which amuse or delude us for a moment, from those deep cravings which, directing all our faculties towards a given end, necessarily exercise a strong influence upon life. It is time to contemplate the latter, and to suggest more grave reflections. While the scope of our faculties is limited to narrow bounds, our desires run out into infinity. From this fact result two reflections; the one afflicting, that the multitude are miserable, because it is easier to form than to obtain our wishes; the other consoling, that they might be happy, since every one, by divine aid, may regulate his desires.

Reduced to the necessity to realize, or restrain them, which course does wisdom indicate? Will ambition conduct us to repose? I know well, that in every rank and position, the inculcation of aspiring thoughts, emulation and rivalry, is the first and last lesson, the grand and beaten precept, upon which the million are acting. I am well aware, how many hearts are wrung by all the fierce and tormenting passions associated with this devouring

one. I affirm nothing in regard to my own interior views, respecting what the world calls fame, glory, and immortality. Those who are most dear to me, will not understand me to be entering my *caveat* to dissuade them from "this last infirmity of noble minds." Could I do it with more eloquence than ever yet flowed from tongue or pen, there will always be a hundred envious competitors for every single niche in the temple of fame. It can be occupied but by one; and he who gains it will exult in his elevation only during its freshness and novelty. The rest, to the torment of fostered and devouring desires, will add the bitterness of disappointment.

I have little doubt, if an exact balance of enjoyment and suffering could be struck, at the last hour, between two persons whose circumstances in other respects had been similar, one of whom had been distinguished in place and power, in consequence of cultivating ambition; and the other obscure in peaceful privacy, in consequence of having chosen that condition, that the scale of happiness would decidedly incline in favour of the latter. In a word, it is the index of sound calculation, to prepare for the fate of the million rather than that of the few. I shall be asked, what is to stimulate to exertion, to study, toil, and sacrifice, to great and noble actions, and what shall lead to

fame and renown, if this incentive be taken away? I answer, that what is ordinarily dignified with the appellation of ambition, is a vile mixture of the worst feelings of our nature. There is in all minds, truly noble, a sufficient impulse towards great actions, apart from these movements, which are generally the excitements of little and mean spirits. Take the whole nature of man into the calculation, and there can never be a want of sufficient impulse towards distinction, without a particle of those contemptible motives, which are generally put to the account of praiseworthy excitement. Truly great men have been remarkable for their exemption from envy, the inseparable concomitant of conscious deficiency; and for a certain calm and tranquil spirit, indicating moderation and comparative indifference in the struggle of emulation. They are able to say, in regard to the highest boon of ambition,

“I neither spurn, nor for the favour call;
It comes unasked-for, if it comes at all.”

He who moderates his desires may also think thus,—“No one can show me the mind, or paint me the consciousness of the ambitious aspirant. Divine Providence, and my own choice, have assigned me the shade. Let me not embitter its

coolness and its satisfactions by idle desires to unite advantages that are, in their nature, incongruous. Let me remember, that mine is the condition of the million. My Creator cannot have doomed so vast a proportion of his creatures to a state which is necessarily miserable. All that remains to me is to make the best of the common lot."

He who chases the phantoms of ambition, resembles the child who imagines that he shall be able to grasp the rainbow, which spans the mountain in the distance; still from mountain to mountain, a new horizon spreads before his eyes. But the courage and perseverance requisite to regulate our desires, may intimidate us. We vex ourselves in the pursuit of fortune, honour and glory. Philosophy is worth more than the whole, and do we expect to purchase it without pain? True, she declares to us, that to realize our desires is a part of the science of happiness; but by no means the most important one. Yet it is the only one to which most men devote themselves. Philosophy should teach us, what desires we ought to receive and cherish, as inmates. When they are fleeting, and spring from a gay and creative imagination, let us yield ourselves without fear to their transient dreams. But when they may exercise a long and decisive influence, let a mature examination teach

us, whether wisdom allows the attempt to realize them. How much uncertainty and torment might we spare our weakness, if from infancy we directed our pursuit towards the essential objects of felicity, and if we stripped those, which, in their issue, produce chimerical hopes and bitter regrets, of their deceitful charms! What gratitude should we not owe that provident instruction, whose cares should indicate, and smooth our road to happiness! The great results, which might be obtained from education, would be, to moderate the desires, and to find some indemnities for the sorrows of life. On the present plan, by arousing our emulation, by enkindling our instinctive ardour to increase our fortune, and eclipse our rivals, we make it a study, if I may so say, to render ourselves discontented with our lot; and, as if afraid that we should not be sufficiently perverted by the contagion of example, we invoke ambition and cupidity to enter the soul. We treat as chimerical those desires, which are so simple and pure, as to be pleasures of themselves, and which look to a happiness easy of attainment.

Let us, then, unlearn most of the ideas we have received. Let us close our eyes on the illusions which surround us. Let us re-mould our plan of life, and retain in the heart only those desires which our Creator has placed there. Let reflection

impart energy to our mind, and be our guide in the new path which reason opens before us.

We shall be told, that these desires animate us unsought and continually. I admit it. But in most men they are simple results of instinct, and are vague, and without decisive effect. A craving for happiness is diffused as widely as life. The enlightened desire of happiness is as rare as wisdom. The mass of our species do not avail themselves of life, to enjoy it; but apparently for other purposes. My first and fundamental maxim is, that no one should live by chance. Freed from vulgar ideas, and guided by the principles of true wisdom, let happiness be our end; and let us view all our employments and pursuits, as means.

I meet men of sanguine temperament, who say in the pride of internal energy,—My calculations must succeed; I am certain to acquire wealth. Another of the same class assures me, that he sees no turn to his rapid career of advancement; and that he is confident of reaching the summit of greatness. What more fortunate result can he propose, than happiness? My pupil should make all his plans subservient to the numbering of happy days even from the commencement of his career.

The young should be early imbued with the sentiment, that God sent them here to be happy; not in indolence, intoxication, or voluptuousness,

but in earnest and vigorous discipline, in the discharge of the duties of their station. And at this bright epoch, when nature spreads a charm over existence, a well-instructed teacher may easily train them to invest their studies, labours, and pursuits, and perhaps even their privations, and severer toils, with a colouring of cheerfulness and gaiety, when contemplated as the only means by which they may hope to reach a desired end. They should be trained to meet events, and brave the shock of adversity, in resigning themselves to the divine will. In other words, they should make enjoyment a means, as well as an end, that they may carry onward, from their first days, an accumulating stock of happiness, with which courage and cheerfulness may paint future anticipations in the mellow lustre of past remembrances. In this way the bow of promise may be made to bend its brilliant arch over every period of this transient existence, connecting what has been, and what will be, in the same radiant span.

Entertaining such views of the direction which might be given to the juvenile mind, I mourn over those weak parents, who are nursing their children with effeminate fondness, not allowing the winds to visit them too roughly, pampering their wishes, instead of teaching them to repress them; and

rather striving to ward from them all pains and privations, than teaching them that they must encounter many sorrows and disappointments, and disciplining them to breast the ills of life with a conquering fortitude. Opulence generally gives birth to this injudicious plan of parental education. Penury, as little directed by sound views, but impelled by the stern teaching of necessity, imparts to the children of the poor, a much more salutary discipline, and they ordinarily come forward with a more robust spirit, with more vigour, power and elasticity; and this is one way in which providence adjusts the balance of advantages between these different conditions.

It would be no disadvantage even to the ambitious and aspiring to abstract, from the toils of their pursuit, the bitter and corroding spirit of rivalry and envy, and in its stead to cultivate sentiments of kindness, complacency and moderation. Let their ends be so noble, as to give an air of dignity to the means that they employ, and they will throw a splendour of self-respect over their course. Let the aspirant say, "I struggle not for myself, but to procure competence for aged parents, to gild their declining years with the view of my success. It is for dependent relatives, orphans, the poor and friendless, whom Providence has given

particular claims on me, that I struggle. It is to benefit and gladden those who are dearer to me than life, and not for my own sordid vanity and ambition, that I strive to toil up the ascent of fame."

Let us beware, however, of aspiring after a perfect felicity. The art I discuss, will not descend from heaven. Its object is, to indicate desirable situations, to guide us towards them, when they offer, and to remove the vexations of life. The greater part of mankind might exist in comfort. They fail of this, in aiming at impracticable amelioration of their condition. It is an egregious folly only to contemplate the dark side of our case. I deem it a mark of wisdom and strength of mind, rather to exaggerate its advantages.

The necessity of moderating our desires and reducing them within the limits of what we may reasonably hope to acquire, has been the beaten theme of prose and song. Yet, who can calculate the sum of torment that has been inflicted by wild and unreasonable desires, by visionary and puerile expectations, beyond all probable bounds of means to realize them, indulged and fostered until they have acquired the force of habit! Whose memory cannot recur to sufferings from envy and ill-will,

generated by cupidity, for the possessions and advantages of others that we have not ; Who can count the pangs which he has endured from extravagant and unattainable wishes ! Poetry calls our mortal sojourn a vale of tears ; yet what ingenuity to multiply the gratuitous means of self-torment. Has another health, wealth, beauty, fortune, endowment, which I have not ? Envy will neither take them from him, nor transfer them to me. Why, then, should I allow vultures to prey upon my spirit ? Learn neither to regret what you want and cannot supply, nor to hate him who is more fortunate. With all his apparent advantages over you, he wants, perhaps, what you may possess, a tranquil mind. There is little doubt that you are the happier person if you contemplate his advantages and his possessions with a cheerful and unrepining spirit.

In indulging your desires beyond reason, you are fostering internal enemies and becoming a self-tormentor. The higher gifts of fortune, the common objects of envious desire, are awarded to but a few. The number of those who may entertain any reasonable hope of reaching them, is very small. But every one can moderate his desires. Every one can set bounds to his ambition. Every one can limit his expectations. What influence

can fortune, events, or power exercise over a person, who has learned to be content with a little, and who has acquired courage to resign even that without repining! Franklin might well smile at the impotent malice of those who would deprive him of his means and his business, when he proved to them that he could live on turnips and rain water. It is not the less true or important, because it has been a million times said, that happiness, the creature of the mind, dwells not in external things.

Let us carefully ascertain, what things are indispensable to our well-being; and let us discipline all our desires towards the acquisition of them. If I consult those who are driven onward by the whirlwind of life, to learn what objects are absolutely necessary to my end, what a long catalogue they will name! If I ask some moralists, how many sacrifices incompatible with human nature, will they impose! Agitated, and uncertain, I am conscious, that my powers are equally insufficient to amass all which the former prescribe, or to tear me from all which the latter disdainfully interdict.

In examining this all-important subject, without the spirit of system, I realize, that the essentials of a happy life are tranquillity of mind, independence, health, competence, and the affection of some of our equals. Let us strive to acquire them.

They are numerous, I admit, and difficult to unite in the possession of an individual. Nevertheless, if a severe discrimination enabled us to bound our pursuit by the desire of obtaining only these objects, what a great and happy change would be effected upon the earth; and how many disappointments would be henceforward unknown!

CHAPTER V.

TRANQUILLITY OF MIND.

By the word tranquillity, I designate that state of the mind, in which, estranged from the weaknesses of life, it tastes that happy calm which it owes to its own power and elevation. Inaccessible to storms, it still admits those emotions which give birth to pure pleasures, and yields to the generous movements which the virtues inspire. Tranquillity seems indifference only in the eyes of the vulgar; but a delightful consciousness of existence accompanies it. We should meditate with thankfulness upon the causes which produce it. Without reasoning we respire and enjoy it; it is the appropriate pleasure of the sage.

A pure conscience is the most profound source of this delightful calm. Without it, we shall attempt in vain to veil our faults from ourselves, or to listen

only to the voice of adulation. An interior witness must testify that we have sometimes sought occasions to be useful; and that we have always welcomed those who offered us opportunities to do good.

Another condition, equally necessary, is to close the heart against unregulated ambition. I am well aware, in laying down this precept, that I shall be deemed an idle dreamer. If you are convinced beyond argument that there is nothing worth seeking in life but distinctions and honours, you may close the volume. If you are ready to receive these brilliant illusions when they come unsought, and return to the repose of your heart should you obtain them not, you may reflect with advantage on my lessons.

To consecrate to true enjoyment as many days as possible, to lose in disquieting desires as few moments as we may, these are the elements of my philosophy. The world, on the other hand, incessantly repeats, "Shine,—ascend high places,—bind fortune to your chariot wheels;" the multitude listen, and consume life in tormenting desires which end in disappointment. I say to my disciple, Make your pursuit, whatever it be, a source of present enjoyment, and be happy without delay. But the cry of objection reaches me, would you wish him to remain in obscurity, and never tran-

scend the limits of the narrow circle in which he was born? I would have him enjoy the self-respect of conscious usefulness, and taste all the innocent pleasures of the senses of the heart and of the mind. Farther than these, I see nothing but the miserable inquietudes of vanity. I admit that the pleasures of gratified ambition are high flavoured and intoxicating; but compelled to choose among enjoyments which cannot all be tasted together, I balance the delights which they spread over life with the pains which it must cost to obtain them. If I incline to ambition, I must fly privacy and my retreat; and renounce the pleasures which my family, friends, and free pursuits daily renew. I must no longer inhabit the paradise of my pleasant dreams. Abandoning the simple and sincere enjoyments of obscurity, I abandon repose and independence.

Suppose I obtain those honours of which the distant brilliancy dazzles my vision, what destiny can I propose to myself? How long can I enjoy my honours? Besieged by incessant alarm, through fear of losing them, how often shall I sigh over the ill-judged exchange by which I bartered peace and privacy for them? Number all the truly happy days of the ambitious; they are those in which, forming his projects, and, in his imagination, removing the obstacles that lie in his way, he

embellishes his career with the illusions of his fancy. Too often the desired objects, which, in the distance glittered in his eyes, resemble those paintings which, seen from afar, present enchanting scenery, but offer only revolting views when beheld close at hand.

I wish to avoid the usual exaggeration upon these subjects. Moralists deceive us when painting the contrast between the virtues and the vices; they assign unmingled felicity to the one, and absolute misery to the other. I am sensible that even in his deepest inquietudes, and notwithstanding his desires and regrets, the votary of ambition still has his moments of intoxicating pleasure. It is not this alone, but happiness that we seek. If we wish only to toil up the heights of ambition to enjoy the dignities of the summit, counsels are useless. If we ask for nothing more than pleasure, they may be varied to infinity, and be found pervading all situations in forms appropriate to all characters. This hypocrite, that victim of envy, yonder miser, do they experience, the moralist will ask, nothing but torment? Mark the misanthrope who incessantly repeats that in a world peopled with perverse beings and malign spirits, existence is an odious burden. This man, notwithstanding, finds his pleasure in a world which he affects so much to detest. Every invective which he throws

out against it, is a eulogy reflected back upon himself. He rises in his own estimation in proportion as he debases others, and finds in himself all the qualities which he makes them want. Does he meet with a partisan of his principles? how delightful for two misanthropes to communicate their discoveries, and to make a joint war of sarcasm upon the human race! Does he find an antagonist? he experiences a charm in controverting him. Besides, as in vilifying human nature, no one can want either facts or arguments to present it in hues sufficiently dark, in the complacency of conscious triumph, he terminates his war of words.

The votary of ambition not only has pleasures which are often dazzling, but perhaps enjoyments not within the ordinary ken, which require profound observation. The ardent aspiration after success gives a charm to efforts in the struggle which would otherwise present only unmixed bitterness. Acts in themselves vile, ridiculous, or revolting, contemplated as means essential to a proposed end, lose their meanness and tendency to lessen self-respect. It is possible, in this view, that even extraordinary humiliations may inspire the ambitious man with a sort of pride, in the consciousness that he has strength to stoop to them for his purposes. In fine, it is too true that a

momentary pleasure may be found in the most capricious aberrations, the most shameful vices, and the most atrocious crimes.

It will be seen that I abandon most of the trite declamation against ambition. I touch not on its long inquietudes, its inevitable torments, exacerbated a hundred-fold, if their victim preserve degrees of mental elevation, and remains of moral sentiment. Life passes pleasantly among men who have just views, upright hearts and frank manners, the true elements of greatness and enjoyment. Surrounded by such minds, we respire, as it were, a free, and sometimes even a celestial atmosphere. Yield yourself to the empire of ambition; and in all countries, and in all time, you condemn yourself to live surrounded by greedy, unquiet, false and vindictive intriguers, gnashing their teeth at all success in which they had no agency. All that encircle you unite insolence and baseness.

Those who envy authority and office are worthy of commiseration. Men in power imagine they are happy; they have but to wish, and it is accomplished. The epitaph of the Swedish minister is sublime, and the index of great truth; he had run the career of power and fortune with success: when near the period of his death, he ordered this inscription for his tomb, Tandem Felix,—*at length I am happy.*

We never leave the society of the great as we entered it; we have become either better or more perverse. Inexperience is easily dazzled with the superficial splendour. For a man of disciplined mind and a character of energy, it is the most useful of schools. Here he tests and confirms his principles. Here he observes, sometimes with terror, sometimes with disgust, the melancholy results of the seductive passions. He here sees those who seem to have reached all their aims enjoying the repose of happy privacy. I anticipate the objection, "that this is all absurdity; that not one will be so convinced of his misery as to resign his power and descend from his elevation to that obscurity for which he sighs." I believe it; and I see in this a deeper shade in his misery. He has so long experienced the pernicious excitement of this splendid torment, that he can no longer exist in repose.

Such is the lot of erring humanity, that the world naturally associates glory and happiness with ambition, and sees not that the association is formed by our own mental feebleness. To rise above vulgar errors and the common train of thinking, to form wise principles, and, still more, to have the courage and decision to follow them, this is the proof of real force of character. But to feel the need of dazzling the vulgar, to be willing to

creep in order to rise, to struggle and dispute for trinkets, this is the common standard by which the multitude estimate a great mind.

Philosophers are accused of having presented grandeur under an unfavourable aspect, in order to console themselves for not having enjoyed it. History reads us another lesson. Aristotle instructed the son of Philip. Plato was received at the courts of kings. Cicero received the title of "father of his country," by a decree of the senate. Boëthius, thrice clad with the consular purple, when his locks were hoary, was dragged to a dungeon. He wrote "the Consolations inspired by Philosophy," and laid down his book at the foot of the scaffold. Marcus Aurelius honoured the throne of the world by those modest virtues which shone still brighter in obscurity. Fenelon was raised to the highest dignities only to experience their bitterness, and, like his great predecessor, to owe his glory and his happy days only to wisdom and retirement. Franklin will be remembered in all time, not as the governor, legislator and ambassador, but as having trained himself to his admirable philosophy of common sense amidst the laborious occupations of a printer.

The certainty of acquiring the self-respect of conscious usefulness, a certainty which the great can seldom have, ought alone to determine a wise

man to quit his obscurity. But if the emoluments and honours of a high station seduce us, let us value our independence, and let us not exchange treasure for tinsel.

CHAPTER VI.

OF MISFORTUNE.

IF we wish our precepts to be followed, we must avoid the extremes to which some moralists and philosophers are too much inclined to press their doctrines, for they are impracticable in real life. It is useless to deny that there are evils against which the aids of reason and friendship are powerless. Let us leave him who is about to lose a friend whose life is blended with his own, to sigh unreproved, Time is necessary to enfeeble his remembrances and assuage his pain. To render man inaccessible to suffering would be to change his nature. Those austere moralists who treat our feebleness with disdain, and who would render us indifferent to the most terrible blows of destiny, would at the same time leave us no sensibility or

enjoyment. Nothing can be more absurd than the vain harangues by which common-place consolation is offered to those who mourn a wife, a child, a friend. All reasonings are ineffectual when opposed to these words: "I have lost my friend: you inform me that my misfortune is without a remedy. If there were a remedy, instead of unavailing tears, I would employ it. It is precisely because there is none, that I grieve." "Your tears are useless." "Still they serve to solace me." "God has done it." "True, and God has formed my heart to suffer from his blow." "Your child is happy, and knew neither the errors nor the sorrows of life." "A parent's instinctive love inspired the desire that I might teach it to avoid both and obtain happiness." "In the course of a long career your friend gave an example of all the virtues." "It is because the loss of these virtues is irreparable to me that I must deplore his death."

The greater portion of men, I admit, exaggerating their regrets, pay a tribute of dissembled grief rather to opinion than to nature; and cold declamation, and frivolous distinctions are sufficient to console them. But the orators of consolation sometimes press their lessons on hearts which are really bleeding. Let such weep at liberty, and attempt not to contradict nature. Solitude may exalt the imagination: but it also inspires consoling

ideas. In the silence of its refuge the desolate mourner brings himself to a nearer communion with him whom he regrets. He invokes, sees, and addresses him. Grief is more ingenious than we imagine in finding consolation, and has learned to employ different remedies, according as the wounds are slight or deep. Two persons have each lost a dear friend. The one studiously avoids the places where he used to meet his friend. The other repairs to his desolate haunts, and surrounding himself by monuments associated with his memory, he seeks, if I may so say, to restore him to life.

The death of a beloved wife is, perhaps, the most inconsolable of evils. Let this follow a series of other misfortunes; and it so effaces their remembrance, that the sufferer feels he has not until then known real grief. But if this affliction be one under which our strength is broken, let it be the only one to obtain this fatal triumph. Under all other misfortunes we may find in ourselves resources for sustaining them; and may invariably either evade or assuage them, or mitigate their bitterness by resignation.

Moralists have expatiated upon the manner in which a sage ought to contemplate the evils of life. Instead of subscribing to all their maxims, often more imposing than practicable, I sketch a summary of my philosophy. I caution the feeble and

erring beings that surround me, not to dream of unmixed happiness. I invite them to partake promptly of all innocent pleasures. The evils too often appended to them may follow. Know nothing of those which have no existence except in opinion. Struggle with courage to escape all that may be evaded. But if it become inevitable to meet them, let resignation, closing your eyes on the past, secure the repose of patient endurance, when happiness exists for you no longer.

Permit me to give these ideas some development. If I may believe the most prevalent modern philosophy, tranquillity of mind is the result of organization, or temperament, and of circumstances. I think that it is, at least in a great degree, of our own procuring; and that we owe it still more to the masculine exercise of our reason, discipline, and mental energy, than to our temperament or condition.

We have reason to deplore that unhappy being, who, yielding to dreams of pleasure, forgets to fore-arm himself against a fatal awakening. The history of great political convulsions, and, more than all, that of the French revolution, furnishes impressive examples of this spectacle. It offers more than one instance, in the feebler sex, of persons who seemed created only to respire happiness. To the advantages of youth, talent, and

beauty, were united the most exalted rank, and wealth, pleasure, and power, apparently to the extent of their wishes. To the dazzling fascination, with which a brilliant crowd surrounded their inexperience, many of them united the richer domestic enjoyments of the wife and mother. In the midst of their illusions, the revolutionary shout struck their ear, like a thunder-stroke; executioners bade them ascend the scaffold.

These great catastrophes, I know, are rare. But there will never cease to be sorrows, which will receive their last bitterness only in death. They are all too painful to be sustained, unless they have been wisely foreseen. Let us think of misfortunes, as of certain companions with whom our lot may one day compel us to associate.

It is novelty alone, which gives our emotions extreme keenness. Whoever has strength of character may learn to endure any thing. The red men of the American wilderness are most impressive examples of this truth;—with what fortitude have they not borne the most extreme torture! Time, however, is the most efficacious teacher of the lesson of endurance. Poussin, in his painting of Eudomidæ, has delineated the human heart with fidelity. The young girl of the piece abandons herself to despair. Half stretched upon the earth, her head falls supinely on the knees of the

aged mother of the dying ; this mother is sitting ; her attitude announces mingled meditation and grief ; amidst her tears, we trace firmness on her visage ; one of the two women is taking her first lesson of misery ; the other has already passed through a long apprenticeship of grief.

Reflection imparts anticipated experience. It takes from misery that air of novelty which renders it terrible. When a wise man experiences a reverse, his new position has been foreseen. He has measured the sorrows, and prepared the consolations. Into whatever scene of trial he may be brought, he will endeavour not to show the embarrassment of a stranger.

Taught to be conscious that we are feeble combatants, thrown upon an arena of strife, let us not calculate that destiny has no blows in store for us. Let us prepare for wounds, painful and slow to heal ; let us blunt the darts of misfortune in advance. Then, if they strike, they will not penetrate so deep. But in premeditating the trials, which may be in reserve for our courage, let not anticipated solicitude disturb the present. Of all mental efforts, foresight is the most difficult to regulate. If we have it not, we fall into reverses unprepared. If we exercise it too far, we are perpetually miserable by anticipation.

The true philosopher prepares himself for con-

tingent perils, by processes which impart a keener pleasure to present enjoyment. He better understands the value of the moments of joy, and learns to dispel the fears, which might mar their tranquillity. That is a gloomy wisdom, which condemns the precepts that invite us to draw, from the uncertainty of our lot, a motive to embellish the moment of actual happiness. Transient beings, around whom every thing is changing and in motion, adopt my maxims. Let us aid those who surround us, to put them in practice. Let us render those who are happy to-day more happy. To-morrow the opportunity may have passed for ever.

As though nature had not sowed sufficient sorrows in our path during our short career, we have added to the mass by our own invention. The offspring of our vanity and puerile prejudices, these factitious pains, seem sometimes more difficult to support, than real evils. A warrior, who has shown fearless courage in the deadly breach, has passed a sleepless night, because he was not invited to a party, or a feast; or because a ribband has not been added to the many, with which he is already decorated. I had been informed, that the wife and son of a distinguished acquaintance were dangerously sick. I met him pale and thoughtful. I was meditating, how to give him hope in regard to

the objects of his supposed anxiety. While I was hesitating how to address him, he made known the subject of his real inquietude; he was in expectation of a high employment; the man of power, in whose hand was the gift, had just received him coldly a second time, and he was anxiously calculating his remaining chances, and striving to divine the causes of his discouraging reception.

To avoid such ridiculous agonies, let us adopt a maxim, not the less true, because the phrase, in which I express it, may seem trivial. Three-quarters and half the remaining quarter of our vexations, are not worth wasting a thought upon their cause. The order of events, which we call by the name of chance, is often more sage than any that human calculation can arrange. If it decides in a manner which at first view seems greatly against us, let us defer our accusations, until we have more thoroughly examined the event. I have met a man, who had long been an aspirant for a certain place, with a radiant countenance, having just obtained it. Three months afterwards, he would have purchased at any price the power of recalling circumstances. I have seen another friend in desolation, because he could not obtain the hand of the daughter of a man, whose enterprises promised an immense fortune; he had been rejected. The speculations of her father all failed; and the

reputation of his integrity and good faith with them. The despairing lover would have shared the poverty and disgrace of a helpless family; and would have been tormented besides, with an incompatible union, of itself sufficient to have rendered him miserable in the midst of all the expected prosperity. One event is contemplated with a charmed eye; another with despair. The issue alone can declare, which of the two we ought to have desired. We do well, therefore, to acquiesce in the wise and kind arrangements of divine Providence.

I grant, that we are surrounded by real dangers. I pretend not to be above suffering; and I attach no merit to becoming the reckless dupe of men or chance. The highest philosophy is at the same time the most simple and practicable. There is no error more common than one, which is taken for profound wisdom. Most men look too deep for the springs of events, and the motives of action. When we are menaced by an evident peril, let us summon all our energy, and courageously struggle to ward it off. If, after all, neither wisdom can evade it, nor bravery vanquish it, let us see how true wisdom can enable us to sustain it.

How many are ignorant of the value of resignation, or confound it with weakness! The courage of resignation is, perhaps, the most high and rare

of all the forms of that virtue. Man received the gift directly from the Author of his being. His desires, inquietudes, misguided opinions, the fruits of an ambitious and incongruous education, have weakened its force in the soul. Who can read the anecdote of the American wilderness without thrilling emotion? An Indian, descending the Niagara river, was drawn into the rapids above the sublime cataract. The nursling of the desert rowed with incredible vigour at first, in an intense struggle for life. Seeing his efforts useless, he dropped his oars, sung his death song, and floated in calmness down the abyss. His example is worthy of imitation. While there is hope, let us nerve all our force, to avail ourselves of all the chances it suggests. When hope ceases, and the peril must be braved, wisdom counsels calm resignation.

With regard to unconquerable evils, the true doctrine is not vain resistance, but profound submission; it conceals the outline of what we have to suffer, as with a veil; it hastens to bring us the fruit of consoling time; it opens our eyes to a clearer view of the possessions which remain to us; it precedes hope, as twilight ushers in the day. It is by laying down certain well ascertained principles of conduct, and re-examining them every day, that a new empire is given to reason, and that we learn to select the most eligible point in all situations in life.

Among the moderns, in pursuit of happiness, some study only to multiply their physical enjoyments ; and, limited to gross sensations, differ little from brutes, except in discoursing about what they eat. Others, higher in the scale of thought, cultivate the pleasures of literature and the fine arts. But subjecting only a single class of their powers to discipline with a view to distinguish themselves from the vulgar, they are not always more happy. True philosophy is chiefly conversant about that kind of acquisition, which pre-eminently constitutes the rational man, forms his reason, and places him, as a kind of sage monarch, in the midst of an unreflecting world surrounded by children full of ignorance and fatuity.

CHAPTER VII.

OF INDEPENDENCE.

WE distinguish many kinds of liberty. That which we owe to equal laws, without being indispensable to a philosopher, renders the attainment of happiness more easy to him. However men differ in their political opinions, they all have an instinctive desire to be free. Every one is reluctant and afraid to submit himself to the capricious power of those about him. The thirst of power is only another form of this ardour for independence.

With what interest we read in history of those ignorant tribes, unknown to fame, whose liberty and simple manners at once astonish and delight us! When visiting the isles of Greece, where the charm of memory rendered the view of their actual slavery more revolting, what delight our travellers have experienced in traversing the little isle of

Casos, because it had never submitted to the Ottoman yoke ! They there found the usages of the ancient Greeks, their costume, their beauty and their amiable and elevated natural manner. This isle is but a rock. But its dangerous shores have defended it against tyranny. Associations with the songs of Homer and Hesiod are renewed. Such a picture delights even a people whose manners are refined to a degree tending to depravation. Thus it is, that those opulent citizens who find the country a place of exile, still decorate their splendid halls with landscapes and flowers.

Let not a sensitive and wandering imagination kindle too readily at the recitals of travellers. Were we to transport ourselves to one of those remote points of the earth where felicity is represented to have chosen her asylum, new usages, manners and pleasures, and a foreign people, every moment reminding us that we are strangers, would perhaps, give birth to the most painful regrets. When in our youth we were charmed as we read of the prodigies of Athens and Rome, we uttered the wish that we had been born in those renowned republics. There is little doubt that, had our wish been realized, we should have been glad to escape their storms, in exchange for greater obscurity, and more tranquil days.

It is a distinguished folly which impels men

far from their country in search of happiness. The greater portion, deceived in their hopes after having wandered amidst danger, die with regret and sorrow, worn out with vexation resulting from the broken ties and remembrances of home. Home is the last thought that comes over the departing mind. Our country is our common mother. We ought to love and sustain her more firmly in her adversity than in her prosperity.

Whatever manners, opinions and talents we carry into another country, we are still strangers there. The manners which we adopt are new and irksome. The eye sees nothing to awaken dear and embellished remembrances; and we find in the heart of no one the reverberating chord of ancient friendship and sympathy. We always regret the places where we knew the first pleasures and the first pains, and saw the first enchanting visions of life; the cherished spots where we learned to love and be loved. If, returning there, drawn back by an invincible sentiment, after a long absence we see it again, what sorrows await us! We find ourselves strangers in our own country. We ask for our parents and friends who departed in succession. The blows were struck at long intervals. We receive them all in a moment. We return to shed tears only on the tombs of our fathers!

Retreat and competence everywhere supply a wise man a degree of independence. Even when the sport of oppression and injustice, he yields to these evils as the allotments of Providence. He would be free in the midst of Constantinople under the government of the Sultan.

Another kind of liberty is the portion of but a few in our own country,—the liberty of disposing of the whole of our leisure time. To those who understand not the value of time, this liberty bequeaths a heavy bondage. But to those who have learned the secret of happiness it is of inestimable value. The privilege of the favoured possessor of opulence is a high one. Neither the slave of business, fashion, opinion or routine, it is in his power at awaking to say, “This day is all my own.”

But moralists exclaim, “You must pay your debt; you must render yourselves useful to society.” Let me not be understood to inculcate the doctrine of indolence. Industry will have wings and power when you unite it to freedom. But how many repeat the hackneyed cry of “the debt to society,” who, in the choice of their profession, had never a thought but of its honours and emoluments! This man whose industry in the pursuit of his choice proves that his toil is his pleasure; that man who is in earnest to serve

every one whom he can oblige, and who might have shone, had he chosen it, in the career of ambition, but who, modest, studious, and free, lives happily in the bosom of retreat, has this man done nothing to acquit his debt? Is his example useless to society?

If my condition deny me leisure and independence in regard to the disposal of my time, without bestowing much concern upon the choice of my profession, I should choose that most favourable to free thoughts, to breathing the open air, and, as much as might be, in view of beautiful scenery. I should consider it as a most important element in my happiness that I should be chiefly conversant with amiable and upright persons. I would also avoid some pursuits which are highly esteemed. The profession of an advocate, having so much to do with the follies, vices, and crimes of society, is one of the most trying, both to integrity and philosophy; but that of the physician, though continually witnessing groans, tears and physical suffering, may become the source of high-reflected pleasure to a generous and humane heart. I would avoid any function the disquieting responsibility of which would disturb my repose. Above all, I should dread one of high honour and emolument, connected with proportionate uncertainty of tenure.

The balance of enjoyment being taken into view, I should prefer an occupation of privacy. This it

would be more easy at once to obtain and preserve. It would expose me less to envy and competition. Exempt from the inquietudes inspired by severe labours, and the ennui of important etiquette, I should at least find an absolute independence, every evening, at the relinquishment of my daily routine of occupation, and I should suffer no care for the morrow; I would learn to enhance the charms of my condition by thinking of the agitation, regrets and alarms of those who are still swept by the whirlwinds of life. In this way I would imitate him, who, to procure a more delicious repose, placed his couch under a tent near the sea, to be lulled by the dashing of its waves and the noise of its storms. But it is time to contemplate the most useful kind of liberty, the only indispensable kind, and happily one which is accessible to all. It is the liberty resulting from self-command and inward mastery of ourselves. It has such a value as to cause all others to be forgotten, and which no other kind can replace.

What liberty can that man enjoy who is the slave of ambition? A gesture, a look of the eye, a smile affrightens him, and causes him painful and trembling calculations what that sinister sign of his master may presage.

Look at the opulent merchant whose hopes are the sport of the winds; seas, robbers, changes of trade, municipal regulations, and a crowd of agents

who seem subordinate, but who really command him.

Whatever kind of liberty we aim to possess, we may certainly conclude, that the surest means to enjoy it is to have few wants. But how restrain our wants? The greater portion are happily placed by their condition where they are ignorant of the objects which most powerfully excite and seduce desire. The golden mean secludes them from snares productive full of the bitterest regret, and exacts of them little effort of wisdom.

The more austere philosophers have altogether disdained those pleasures which they could never hope to obtain. Reducing themselves to the limits of the strictest necessity, they indemnify themselves for some privations by the certainty of being secured from many pains, and by the sentiment of conscious independence. This is, doubtless, one of the surest means of obtaining independence; and they who attempt to employ any other, differ from the vulgar by their principles rather than their conduct.

How many objects, of which the contemplation awakens the desires, would have nothing dangerous if we could always exercise a stern self-controul over our minds! The surest means of exercising this self-controul is to reduce the number of our wants. To do it, I admit, demands a rare elevation

of mind and the exercise of a high degree of philosophy. But since its value is beyond its cost, let us dare to acquire it.

While the fleeting dreams of pleasure hover around us, let reason still say to us, an instant may dissipate them. Let us, then, be ready to find a new pleasure in the consciousness of our firmness and our masculine and vigorous independence. An enlightened mind reigns over pleasures; and while they glitter around, enjoys all that are innocent; but disdains a sigh or a regret when they have taken wings and disappeared.

I commend, in some respects, the example of Alcibiades, the disciple of the graces and of wisdom, who astonished in turn the proud Persian by his dignity, and the Lacedemonian by his austerity. His enemies may charge him with incessant change of principle. To me he seems always the same, always superior to the men and circumstances that surround him. Such strong mental stamina resemble those robust plants that sustain, without annoyance, the extreme of heat and cold,

CHAPTER VIII.

OF HEALTH.

HEALTH is usually the result of moderation, cheerfulness, and the absence of care. Divine wisdom has ordained, that the inordinate passions which disturb our days, are those which have a natural tendency to shorten them.

If there were ground for a single charge against the justice of nature, it would be, that the errors of inexperience seem punished with too great severity. We prodigally waste the material of life and enjoyment, as we do our other possessions, as if we thought it inexhaustible.

To the errors of youth succeed the vices of mature age. Ambition and covetousness, envy and hatred, concur to devour the very aliment of life. The storms which prostrate the moral faculties, equally sap the physical energy. Every

depraved passion is a consuming poison. To what other source of evil can we assign those inquietudes and puerile anxieties, which disturb the days of the greater portion of mankind, than that they are occupied by trifling interests, and agitated by vain debates? or, that they are the slaves of some vice? Cheerful emotions sustain life, and produce the effect of a gentle current of air upon flame. Trains of thought habitually elevated, and sometimes inclined to reverie, impart a high enjoyment to the spirit; and to be able to command this, is one of the rarest felicities of endowment. A distinguished physician recorded in his diary the apparent paradox, that three parts of society die of vexation or grief.

I suspect, that not one in a thousand is aware how much temperance and moderation in the use of food conduce to health. There are very few among us who do not daily consume twice the amount of food necessary to satisfy the requisitions of nature. The redundant portion must weigh as a morbid and unconcocted mass upon the wheels of life. Every form of ardent spirits, is unquestionably a poison, slow or rapid, in proportion to the excess in which it is used. Disguise it as we may, be the pretexts of indulgence as ingenious as plausible, as inclination and appetite can frame, it retains its intrinsic tendencies under every concealment.

Wine, in moderation, is doubtless, less deleterious than any of its substitutes. In declining age, and in innumerable cases of debility, it may be indicated as a useful remedy; but even here, only as a less evil to countervail a greater. Pure water, all other circumstances equal, is always a healthier beverage for common use.

Next to temperance, a quiet conscience, a cheerful mind, and active habits, I place early rising as a means of health and happiness. I have hardly words for the estimate which I form of that sluggard, male or female, that has formed the habit of wasting the early prime of day in bed. Laying out of the question the positive loss of life, the (*magna pars dempta solido de die*), great portion of the entire day, and that too of the most inspiring and beautiful part, when all the voices of nature invoke man from his bed; leaving out of the calculation, that longevity has been almost invariably attended by early rising; to me, late hours in bed present an index to character, and an omen of the ultimate hopes of the person who indulges in this habit. There is no mark so clear, of a tendency to self-indulgence. It denotes an inert and feeble mind, infirm of purpose, and incapable of that elastic vigour of will which enables the possessor always to accomplish what his reason ordains. The subject of this unfortunate habit cannot but

have felt self-reproach, and a purpose to spring from his repose with the freshness of the dawn. If the mere indolent luxury of another hour of languid indulgence is allowed to carry it over this better purpose, it argues a general weakness of character, which promises no high attainment or distinction. These are never awarded by fortune to any trait, but vigour, promptness and decision. Viewing the habit of late rising, in many of its aspects, it would seem as if no being, that has any claim to rationality, could be found in the allowed habit of sacrificing a tenth, and that the most pleasant and spirit-stirring portion of life, at the expense of health, and the curtailing of the remainder, for any pleasure which this indulgence could confer.

Huffland has published a work, upon the art of prolonging life, full of interesting observations. "Philosophers," says he, "enjoy a delightful leisure. Their thoughts, generally estranged from vulgar interests, have nothing in common with those afflicting ideas with which other men are continually agitated and corroded. Their reflections are agreeable by their variety, their liberty, and sometimes even by their frivolity. Devoted to the pursuits of their choice, the occupations of their taste, they dispose freely of their time. Oftentimes they surround themselves with young people, that their natural vivacity may be communicated to

them, and in some sort, produce a renewal of their youth." We may make a distinction between the different kinds of philosophy, in relation to their influence upon the duration of life. Those which direct the mind towards sublime contemplations, even were they in some degree superstitious, such as those of Pythagoras and Plato, are the most salutary. Next to them, I place those, the study of which, embracing nature, gives enlarged and elevated ideas upon infinity, the stars, the wonders of the universe, the heroic virtues, and the pure and elevated doctrines of divine revelation.

"But those systems," says the writer just quoted, "which turn only upon painful subtilties, which are dogmatic and positive, which bend all facts and opinions to form and adjust them to certain preconceived principles; in fine, such as are thorny, barren, narrow, and contentious, these are fatal in tendency, and cannot but abridge the life of those who cultivate them. Of this class was the philosophy of the Peripatetics, and that also of the Scholastics."

Tumultuous passions, and corroding cares, are two sources of evil influences, which a true philosophy avoids. Another influence, adverse to life, is that mental feebleness, which renders persons perpetually solicitous about their health, effeminate and unhappy. Fixing their thoughts intensely on the

functions of life, those functions, that are subjects of this anxious inspection, become wearied. Imagining themselves diseased, they soon become so. The undoubting confidence that we shall enjoy health, is perhaps one of the best means of preserving it.

I am ignorant of the exact influence of moral upon physical action, in relation to health. But of this I am confident, that it is prodigious; that physicians have not made it a sufficient element in their calculations, or employed it as they should; and that in future, under a wise and more philosophic direction, it may produce an immense result, both in restoring and preserving health.

A man reads a letter, which announces misfortunes, or untoward events. His head becomes disordered; his appetite ceases; he becomes faint and oppressed; and his life is in danger. No contagion, however, no physical blow has touched him. A thought has palsied his forces in a moment; and has successively deranged every spring of life. We have read of persons of feeble and uninformed mind, who have fallen ill, in consequence of the cruel sport of those who have ingeniously alarmed their imagination, and cautiously indicated to them a train of fatal symptoms. Since imagination can thus certainly overturn our physical powers, why may it not under certain regu-

lations, restore them? Among the numberless recorded cases of cures, reputed miraculous, it is probable, that a great part may be accounted for on this principle.

Suppose a paralytic disciple of the school of miracles, whose head is exalted with ideas of the mystic power of certain holy men, and who is meditating on the succour which he expects from a divine interposition manifested in his favour. In an exstasy of faith, he sees a minister of heaven descend enveloped in light, who bids him arise and walk. In a moment the unknown nervous energy, excited by the mysterious power of faith, touches the countless inert and relaxed movements. The man arises and walks. Perhaps some of the miracles of Prince Hohenloe may be accounted for on the same principle. During the siege of Lyons, when bombs fell on the hospital, the terrified paralytics arose and fled.

I am not disposed to question all the cures which in France have been attributed to magnetism. We know what a salutary effect the sight of his physician produces on the patient, who has confidence in him. His cheerful and encouraging conversations are among the most efficient remedies. If we entertained a long-cherished and intimate persuasion, that by certain signs or touches he could dispel our complaints, his gestures would have a

high moral and physical influence. Magnetism was in this sense, as Bailly justly remarked, a true experiment upon the power of the imagination. At the moment of its greatest sway, while some regarded it an infallible specific, and others deemed it entirely inefficient, another class held it in high estimation. I cite an extract from the report of the Academy of Science.

“We have sought,” say they, “to recognize the presence of the magnetic fluid. But it escaped our senses. It was said, that its action upon animated bodies was the sole proof of its existence. The experiments which we made upon ourselves, convinced us that, as soon as we diverted our attention, it was powerless. Trials made upon the sick taught us, that infancy, which is unsusceptible of prejudice experienced nothing from it; that mental alienation resisted the action of magnetism, even in an habitual condition of excitability of the nerves, where the action ought to have been most sensible. The effects which are attributed to this fluid are not visible, except when the imagination is forewarned, and capable of being struck. Imagination, then, seems to be the principle of the action.

“It remained to be seen whether we could reproduce these effects by the influence of imagination alone. We attempted it, and fully succeeded. Without touching the subjects who believed them-

selves magnetized and without employing any sign, they complained of pain and a great sensation of heat. We have seen an exalted imagination become sufficiently energetic to take away the power of speech in a moment. At the same time, we proved the nullity of magnetism, put in opposition with the imagination. Magnetism alone, employed for thirty minutes, produced no effect.

“ What we have learned, or, at least, what has been confirmed to us in a demonstrative and evident manner, by examination of the processes of magnetism is, that man can act upon man at every moment, by striking his imagination; and that signs and gestures the most simple may have effects the most powerful.”

These truths had never before acquired so much evidence. We know that cures may be wrought by the single influence of imagination. Ambrose Paré, Boerhaave, and many other physicians, have cited striking proofs of this fact. The first of these writers procured abundant perspiration from a patient, by making him believe that a perfectly inert substance given to him, was a violent sudorific.

It is worthy of the attention of moralists and physiologists, as well as physicians, to examine to what point we may obtain salutary effects, by exciting the imagination. But perhaps there would soon be cause to dread the perilous influence of this

art, which can kill as well as make alive. This excitable and vivid faculty is never more easily put in operation, than when acted upon by the presentiments of superstition.

We possess another means of operation, which may be exercised without danger, and the power of which is, also capable of producing prodigies. Education rendering most men feeble and timid, they are ignorant how much an energetic will can accomplish. It is able to shield us from many maladies; and to hasten the cure of those under which we labour.

In mortal epidemics, the physicians, who are alarmed at their danger, are ordinarily the first victims. Fear plunges the system into that state of debility, which predisposes it to fatal impressions, while the moral force of confidence, communicating its aid to physical energy, enables it to repel contagion.

I could cite many distinguished names of men, who attributed their cure, in desperate maladies, to the courage which never forsook them, and to the efforts which they made to keep alive the vital spark, when ready to become extinct. One of them pleasantly said, "I should have died like the rest, had I wished it."

Pecklin, Barthes, and others, think, that extreme desire to see a beloved person once more, has sometimes a power to retard death. It is a de-

lightful idea. I feel with what intense ardour one might desire to live another day, another hour, to see a friend or a child for the last time. The flame of love, replacing that of life, blazes up for a moment before both are quenched in the final darkness. The last prayer is granted; and life terminates in tasting that pleasure for which it was prolonged. If this be true, the principle on which some of the most touching incidents of romance are founded, is not a fiction.

I have no need to say, that an energetic will to recover from sickness has no point of analogy with that fearful solicitude which the greater part of the sick experience. The latter, produced by mental feebleness, increases the inquietude and aggravates the danger. Even indifference would be preferable. If education had imparted to us the advantages of an energetic will and real force of mind, if from infancy we had been convinced of the efficacy of this moral power, we have reason to believe, that in many cases it would have been, in union with the desire of life, an element in the means of healing our maladies.

Medicine is still a science so conjectural that the most salutary method of cure, in my view, is that which strives not to contradict nature, but to second her efforts by moral means. I am ready to believe that amidst the real or imagined triumphs

of science, those of medicine will, in centuries to come, hold a rank to which its past achievements will have borne no proportion. But what an immense amount of experiment will be necessary! How many unfortunate beings must contribute to the expense of these experiments!

Contrary to the general opinion, I highly esteem physicians, and think but very little of medicine. In the profession of medicine we find the greatest number of men of solid minds and various erudition; and the best friends of humanity. But they are in the habit of vaunting the progress of their science. To me it seems incessantly changing its principles, without ever varying its results. The systems of various great men have been successively received and rejected. Do we however, imagine that the great physicians who have preceded us were more unfortunate in their practice than those of our days? Among the most eminent physicians of our cities, one practises by administering strong cathartics. Another is resolute for copious bleeding. A third bids us watch and wait the indications of nature. Each of these assumes that the system of the rest is fatal. At the end of the year, however, I doubt if any one of them has more reproaches to make, as it regards want of success, than any other.

From these facts, there are those who hold that

it is most prudent to confide to nature, as the physician; forgetful that, if he could bring no other remedy than hope, he unites moral to physical aid. Yet, the very persons who, in health are readiest to maintain this doctrine, like children who are heroes during the day, but cowards in the dark, when they are sick, are as prompt as others in sending for the physician.

Even if agitation and fear had not fatal effects, in rendering us more accessible to maladies, wisdom would strive to banish them, in pursuit of the science of happiness. Fear, by anticipating agony, doubles our suffering. If there could exist a rational ground for continual inquietude, it would be found in a frail constitution. But how many men of the feeblest health survive those of the most vigorous and robust frame! Calculations upon the duration of life are so uncertain that we can always make them in our favour.

To him who cultivates a mild, pleasant and christian philosophy, old age itself should not be contemplated with alarm. It may seem a paradox to say that all men are nearly of the same age, in reference to their chances of another day. Men are as confident of seeing to-morrow and the succeeding day, at eighty, as at sixteen. Such is the beautiful veil with which nature conceals from us the darkness of the future.

In general, men have less sympathy for the suffering than their condition ought to inspire, We meet them with a sad face and are more earnest to show them that we are afflicted ourselves, than to seek to cheer their dejection. We multiply so many questions touching their health that it would seem as if we feared to allow them to forget that they were unwell.

Of all subjects of conversation, my own pains and physical infirmities have become the least interesting to me; as I know they must be to others. I do not wish that those who surround my sick bed should converse as though arranging the preparations for my last dress, or determining the hour of my interment.

If we would live in peace, and die in tranquillity, let us, as much as possible, avoid importunate cares. Our business is to unite as many friends as we may; and to beguile pain and sorrow by treasuring as many resources of innocent amusement as our means will admit. If our sufferings become painful and incurable, we must concentrate our mental energy and settle on our solitary powers of endurance. We die, or we recover. Nature, though calm, moves irresistibly to her point; and complaint is always worse than useless.

But in arming ourselves with courage to support our own evils, let us preserve sensibility and sym-

pathy for the sufferings of others. It is among the dangerously afflicted that we find those unfortunate beings who are most worthy to inspire our pity. Their only expectation is death, preceded by cruel pains ; and yet they, probably, suffer less for themselves than for weeping dependents whom they are leaving, it may be, without a single prop. During the few days of sorrow that remain to them on earth, how earnestly ought we to strive to mitigate their pains, to calm their alarms and animate their feeble hopes ! Blessed be that beneficent being who shall call one smile more upon their dying lips !

Let us thank God for religion. Philosophy may inculcate stern endurance and wise submission ; but knows not a fit and adequate remedy. The hopes and the example imparted by him *who went about doing good*, are alone sufficient for the relief of such cases, of which, alas ! our world is full.

CHAPTER IX.

OF COMPETENCE.

SOME philosophers announce to us, with sententious gravity, that virtue ought to be the single object of our desires ; and that, strengthened by it, we can support privations and misery without suffering. Useless moralists ! Shall I yield faith to precepts which the experience of every day falsifies ? It is only necessary, in refutation, to present a man who has broken his limb, or whose children suffer hunger.

His plan is wise, who examines, with a judgment free from ambition, the amount of fortune necessary to competence in his case, viewed in all its bearings ; and commences the steady pursuit of it. Having reached that measure, if his desires impel him beyond the limit which, in a more reasonable hour, he prescribed for himself, he henceforward

strives to be happy by sacrificing enjoyment. He barter it for a very uncertain means of purchasing even pleasures. In this way competence becomes useless to the greater part of those who obtain it. Victims of the common folly, and still wishing a little more, they lose in the effort to get rich, the time which they ought to spend in enjoyment. We see grasping and adroit speculators on every side; and, but rarely, men who know how to employ the resources of a moderate fortune. It is not the art of acquiring beyond competence, but of wisely spending, that we need to learn.

Our business in life is to be happy; and yet, simple and obvious as this truism is, the greater number disdain or forget it. To judge from the passions and objects that we see exciting man to action, we should suppose that he was placed on the earth, not to become happy, but rich.

To what purpose so many cares and studies? That man, we are answered with a peculiar emphasis, has an immense income. In his rare, brilliant and envied condition, if he does not vegetate under the weight of ennui, I recognise in him a man of astonishing merit.

The opulent may be divided into two classes. The employment of the one is to watch over their expenditures. The other study the mode of dissipating their revenue. Can I present, in detail, the

cares and vexations which an immense fortune brings? The possessor leaves discussion with his tenants, to commence angry disputes with his workmen. From these he departs to listen to the schemes of projectors, or to the information of advocates. Is not such a result dearly purchased at the expense of repose, independence and time? Would it not be better to relinquish a part of these possessions, in order to dispose, in peace, of the remainder? I admit, that a man who devotes himself to lucrative pursuits is not overwhelmed with continual listlessness. The banker respires again, after having grown pale over his accounts. A speculation has succeeded, and the enchantment of success banishes his alarms, fatigues, and slavery. But he whose purpose in life is to secure as many happy moments as he can, and who sees how many innocent pleasures the other allows to escape him, would refuse his fortune at the price which he pays for it.

Another opulent class inherit fortunes acquired by the industry and sacrifices of their fathers. Rendered effeminate in a school, the reverse of that in which their fathers were trained, without resources in themselves, accustomed from infancy to have their least desires anticipated, under the influence of feeble parents, pliant and servile instructors, greedy servants, and a seducing world, their

appetite is early palled, and every pleasure in life worn out.

But suppose the rich heir brought up as though he were not rich, destiny places before him a strange alternative. If he succeed in resisting desires which every thing excites and favours, what painful struggles! If he yield to them, what effort can preserve him an untainted mind? The experience of all time declares the improbability that he will resist. So many pretended friends are at hand to take up the cause of the present against the future, a cause, too, which always finds a powerful patron in our own bosoms! The pleasures of the senses have, besides, this dangerous advantage, that before we have tasted them we are sufficiently instructed by the imagination, that we shall receive vivid and delightful emotions from their indulgence. We are not certain that pleasures of a higher class have a charm of enchantment until after we have made the happy experiment. Thus every thing prepares the opulent for the sadness of satiety, moral disgust and ennui without end, the only suffering of life which is not softened by hope.

You will sometimes see these men at public places, where they are professedly in search of amusement, giving no sign of existence except by an occasional yawn. Cast your eyes on those spectators who are alive to the most vivid enthu-

siasm. They are young students, or mechanics, who have economised ten days to spend an hour of the eleventh in this amusement! It is in clean cottages, in small but well-directed establishments, that pleasures are vivid, because they are gained at a small price, and through industry and order. A festival is projected, or a holiday returns. Friends are assembled, and how blithe and free is the joy! A slight economy has been practised to supply the moderate expenses. There is high pleasure in looking forward to the epoch and in making the arrangements in anticipation. There is still more pleasure in the remembrance. When the interval which separates us from pleasure is not very long, even this interval has charms.

No human calculation will ever reach the sum of agony that has been inflicted by the jealousy and envy that have resulted from that most erroneous persuasion, that certain conditions and circumstances of life bring happiness in themselves. Beautifully has the bible said, that "God hath set one thing over against another;" has balanced the real advantages of the different human conditions. The result of my experience would leave me in doubt and at a loss, in selecting the condition which I should deem most congenial to happiness. I should have to balance abundance of food, on the one hand, against abundance of appetite, on the other;

the habit superinduced by the necessity of being satisfied with a little, with the habit of being disgusted with the trial of much. There are joys, numerous and vivid, peculiar to the rich; and others, in which none but those in the humbler conditions of life can participate. In the whole range of the enjoyment of the senses, if there be any advantage, it belongs to the poor. The laws of our being have surrounded the utmost extent of human enjoyment with adamantine walls, which one condition can no more overleap than another. It is wonderful to see this admirable adjustment, like the universal laws of nature, acting everywhere and upon everything. Even in the physical world, what is granted to one country is denied to another; and the wanderer who has seen strange lands and many cities, in different climes, only returns to announce, as the sum of his experience and the teaching of years, that light and shadow, comfort and discomfort, pleasure and pain, like air and water, are diffused in nearly similar measures over the whole earth.

What a touching narrative is recorded of the suppers of two of the greatest men of the past age, of whom one was the Abbé de Condillac. Both were so poor that the expenses were reduced to absolute necessities. But what conversations prolonged the repast, and with what swiftness flew

the enchanted hours ! Neither great genius nor profound acquirements are necessary to enjoy evenings equally pleasant.

Those who compose an establishment of moderate competence, rarely leave it. All the joys which spring up in the bosom of a beloved family seem to have been created for them. Give them riches, without changing their hearts, and they would taste less pleasure. New duties and amusements would trench upon a part of that time which had hitherto been sacred to friendship. More conversant with society, they would be less together. Receiving more visitants, they would see fewer friends. Transported into a new sphere where a thousand objects of comparison would excite their desires, they would, perhaps, for the first time, experience privations and regrets.

Women and young people taste the advantages which a retired, pleasant and modest condition offers only so long as they avoid comparisons of that lot with one which the world considers more favoured. We must carry into the world a high philosophy, or never quit our retreat.


Persons even of a disciplined reason, just thought, and a noble character, may grow dizzy, for a moment, with the splendour and noise of opulence, perceived for the first time. But as soon as they begin to blush and forfeit self-respect in tracing the

causes of their intoxication, the scene vanishes, and, as they contemplate and compare, it is replaced by the sentiment of their own happiness. In the midst of the brilliant crowd they experience a legitimate pride in saying, From how many regrets and cares am I saved! How many futilities are here, of which I have no need!

But I shall be told, that opulence has at least this advantage, that it attracts consideration. There is no doubt that many people measure the esteem they pay you by the scale of your riches. You will never persuade them that merit often walks on foot, while stupidity rides in a carriage.

But will a man esteem himself a philosopher, and take into his calculation the opinion of such fools as these? In a circle where opulence puts forth its splendour, when you experience a slight revulsion of shame in perceiving that the simplicity of your dress is remarked, ask yourself if you would change your mode of life, character and talents with those around you? If you feel that you would not, repress the weakness of wishing incompatible advantages; and resume the self-respect of an honest man.

To be satisfied with a moderate fortune is, perhaps, the highest test and best proof of philosophy. All others seem to me doubtful. He who can live content on a little, gives a pledge that he would



preserve his probity and courage in the most difficult situations. He has placed his virtue, repose and happiness, as far as possible above the caprices of his kind, and the vicissitudes of earthly things.

There are moments when the desire of wealth penetrates even the retreat of a sage, not with the puerile and dangerous wish to dazzle with show, but with the hope, dear to a good mind, that it might become a means of extended usefulness. When imagination creates her gay visions, we sometimes think of riches, and in our dreams make an employment of them worthy of envy. What a delightful field then opens before those who possess riches! They can encourage the progress of science, and aid in advancing the glory of letters. How much assistance they can offer to deserving young people, whose first efforts announce happy dispositions, and whose character, at the same time, little fitted for worldly success, is a compound of independence and timidity! How much they may honour themselves in decking the modest retreat of the aged scholar, who has consecrated his life to study, and who has neglected his personal fortune to enrich the age with the inventions of genius! They have the means of giving a noble impulse to the arts, without trenching upon their resources. A picture, which perpetuates the remembrance of a generous or heroic exploit, costs no more than a

group of bacchanalians or debauchees. A career more beautiful still, is open to opulence. Of how many vices and how many tears it may dry the source! A rich man, to become happy, has only to wish to become so. He can not only immortalize his name as the patron of arts and useful inventions, but, what is better, can deserve the blessings of the miserable. Such pleasures are durable, and may be tasted with unsated relish, after a settled lassitude from the indulgence of all others.

If I have ever allowed myself the indulgence of envy, it is after having tasted the pleasure of rewarding merit, or relieving distress, in thinking how continually such celestial satisfactions are within the reach of the opulent. What a calm is left in the mind after having wiped away tears! What aspirations are excited in noting the joy and gratitude consequent upon misery relieved! How delightful to recur to the remembrance during the vigils of the night-watches! How it expands the heart, to reflect upon the consciousness of the all-powerful and all-good Being, measuring the circuit of the universe in doing good! Unhappily, the experience of all time demonstrates that the possession of opulence and power not only has no direct tendency to inspire increased sensibility to such satisfaction, but has an opposite influence.

For one, rendered more kind and benevolent by good fortune, how many become callous, selfish, and proud by it! Kindly and wisely has providence seen fit to spare most men this dangerous trial.

Let not such seducing dreams, however, leave us a prey to ambitious and disappointed desires at our awakening. It is in the sphere where providence has placed us, that we must search for the means of being useful; and if there are pleasures which belong only to opulence, there are others which can be best found in mediocrity.

CHAPTER X.

OF OPINION, AND THE ESTEEM OF MEN.

IN selecting the same route, in which the agitated crowd is pressing onward, we are evidently on the wrong road to happiness ; since we hear the multitude on every side expressing dissatisfaction with their life. If we choose a different path, we cannot expect to evade the shafts of censure, since the same multitude are naturally disposed, from pride of opinion, to think all, not on the same road with themselves, astray. It is, then, an egregious folly to hope for a happiness thus pursued by system, and for the approbation of the vulgar at the same time. Among the obstacles which are at war with our repose, one of the greatest, and at the same time most frivolous, is the fatal necessity of becoming of importance to others, instead of becoming

calmly sufficient to ourselves. Like restless children, always seduced by appearances, it is a small point, that we are happy in our condition. We desire that it should excite envy. A happiness which glares not in the eyes of the multitude, compelling them to take note of it, is no longer regarded as happiness. There are both dupes and victims of opinion. Those who are devoured by the fever of intrigue, and those who, to dazzle others, dissipate their fortune, are the miserable victims. The dupes are those who voluntarily weary themselves out of three-quarters of their life, and offer this as their apology,—“ These visits, these ceremonies, these evening parties ! they are tiresome, we grant. But we must mix with good company.” Why not always mix then, with the best ; your own enlightened and free thoughts ?

I shall be obliged to present one truth under a thousand forms. It is that much courage is exacted for the attainment of happiness. Such a man has estimable qualities, an interesting family, tried friends, a fortune equal to his wants. His lot ought to seem a delightful one. How differently the public judge ! “ This man,” says the public, “ has intelligence. Why has he not increased his fortune ? He is able to distinguish himself. Why has he not sought place or office ? He seems to stand aloof, that he may pique himself on a proud

and foolish originality. We judge him less favourably. Every one distinguishes himself, that can. To be without distinction is a proof that he has not power to acquire it." If the man, of whom this is said, has not courage, the public will end, by rendering him ashamed of his happiness.

To hear the false reasoning of the multitude is not what astonishes me. That stupid people, full of self-esteem, should hold these foolish discourses, with strong emphasis, is perfectly natural. What I wonder at is, that their maxims should guide people of understanding.

We are guilty of the whimsical contradiction of judging our own ideas with complacency, and of pronouncing upon those of others with severity. Yet we every day sacrifice principles which we esteem, through fear of being blamed by people whom we despise.

I would by no means desire to see those most dear to me arrogantly setting at defiance received ideas and usages. These generally have a salutary moral sway in repressing the influence of the impudent and abandoned. I am not insensible to the danger of following our independent judgment beyond the limits of a regulated discretion. But there is no trait in the young for which I feel a more profound respect, than the fixed resolve to consult their own light, in settling the rules of their

conduct, and selecting their alternatives. A calm and reflecting independence, an unshaken firmness in encountering vulgar prejudices, is what I admire as the evidence of strong character, fearless thinking, and capability of self-direction.

How often must every reflecting mind have been led to similar views of human nature! To form just estimates and entertain right sentiments of our kind, we must not contemplate men under the action of the narrowness of sectarian hate, or through the jaundiced vision of party feeling. We must see them, not only amidst the prosperous scenes of life, but also, when great and sweeping calamities level men to the consciousness and the sympathies of a common nature, and a sense of common exposure to misery, and open the fountains of generous feeling. Who has not seen men, on such occasions, forget their pride, their miserable questions of rank and precedence, and meet with open arms, and the mingled tears of gratitude and relief, persons, the view of whom under other circumstances, would have called forth only feelings of scornful comparison and reckless contempt!

The moment I escape the yoke of opinion, what a vast and serene horizon stretches out before my eyes! The pleasures of vanity scatter like morning mists. Those of repose and independence remain. I no longer sacrifice to the disquieting desire of

preserving a protector, or eclipsing my rivals. I am no longer the slave of gloomy etiquette. I henceforward prolong my delightful evenings for my own enjoyment. The caprices of men have lost their empire over me. If poor, I shall remain a stranger to the pains excited by blasting ridicule, and overwhelming contempt. If rich, indolent and impertinent people will no longer regulate my expenses; and the happy choice of my pleasures will multiply my riches. These are presented to a wise man in two opposite relations. Do they call for some aid? The most tender interest excites him to attend. Do they show a disposition to manage him? He meets the attempt only with profound disdain. He who possesses a disciplined reason, and a courageous mind, does not choose to walk by the faith of a feeble and uncertain guide, who has need himself to be led. Allow yourself to become docile to the eccentric laws of opinion, and the slave of its imperious caprices, and follow it with the most earnest perseverance of loyalty; still it will finally terminate in condemning you.

But hypocrisy speaks against me, and feeble men ask me, if it be not dangerous, thus to inculcate contempt of opinion? In following but a part of the ideas, which I announce, my readers might be led astray. The whole must be adopted, for a fair experiment of the result. A physician had chosen

many plants, from which to form a salutary decoction. His patient swallowed the juice of but one, and was poisoned.

Let us discard that timidity, which conducts to falsehood; and, to subserve morals, let us be faithful to truth. The wicked and the virtuous alike break the yoke of opinion; the former to increase his power of annoyance; the latter to do good.

I can conceive, that a depraved man will commit fewer faults, in yielding to the caprices of opinion, than in abandoning himself to his own errors. There are cruel passions and shameful vices, which he reproves even in the midst of his aberrations. But in doing so he gives to falsehood the name of politeness, and to cowardice the title of prudence. His movements are regulated by the terror of ridicule. To form true men, it is indispensable, that this precept should be engraven on their hearts,—Fear nothing but remorse.

The simple and generous mind, that follows these lessons, and is worthy of happiness, need not blush in view of his course. Only let him march on with unshrinking courage. In breaking the yoke of opinion, let him fly the still more shameful chains which the passions impose. In contemning the prejudices of the multitude, dread still more those fatal instructors, who treat morality as a popular

fable, and pretend to the honour of dispelling our errors. The aberrations of opinion prove only, that the most bold, not the most virtuous, press forward to announce their principles. These principles cannot annihilate that secret and universal opinion, that voice of conscience, without which the moral world would have presented only a chaos ; and the human race would have perished. Consult those men, who have been instructed by the lessons of wisdom and experience. Consult those whom you would choose to resemble. Their first precept will be, that you descend into yourself. If we interrogate conscience, in good faith, she will enlighten us. She makes herself heard in the tumult of our vices, even against our will. If she become distorted, during the storm of our passions, she recovers the serenity of truth, as soon as that passes away ; as a river, which has been agitated by a tempest, as soon as a calm returns, reflects anew the verdure of the shores and the azure of heaven.

If there were a people formed by wise laws, whose words were frank, and whose actions upright, there it would be a duty to hearken to the voice of opinion in religious silence, and to follow its decrees. Phocion asked, what foolish thing he had done when the Athenians applauded him ? Happy the country, where this would have been a criminal

pleasantry, and where the pages of that chapter which condemns opinion ought to be torn out.

Perhaps I may be accused of contradiction, in saying that, in the enlightened pursuit of happiness the opinion of the multitude must be received with neglect; and yet, that it is pleasant to be esteemed by the society, of which we are members. We receive their services, and ought to know the pleasure of obliging them. We often share those weaknesses, which we censure in them. Our multiplied relations with them render their affection desirable. It may not be necessary to happiness; but it gives to enjoyment a more vivid charm.

May we be able, in pursuing the path indicated by wisdom, to obtain esteem, and taste the delight of a sentiment still pleasanter, and more precious. Friendship is, to esteem, what the flower is to the stem which sustains it.

But I can never imagine, that we ought to become subservient to the caprices of opinion. We should first be satisfied with ourselves; and afterwards, if it may be, with others. To merit affection, I perceive but two methods; to love our kind, and to cultivate those virtues which diffuse a charm over life.

CHAPTER XI.

OF RESPECT TOWARDS OUR FELLOW CREATURES.

THERE is no such being as a misanthrope. The men designated by this name, may be divided into many classes. In one class I see men of philosophic minds, revolted by our vices, or shocked by our contradictions, who censure these universal traits with a blunt frankness. Their disgust springs from the evils, which the universal follies of the age have shed upon our career. But if they really hated men, would they wield the pen of satire, in striving to correct them?

Another class consists of those unfortunate beings, who hope to find peace only in solitude. They fly a world which has pierced their heart with cruel wounds; and perhaps avow, in words, an implacable hatred towards men. But their sensibility belies their avowal; and we soothe their

griefs, as soon as we ask their services. Finally, there are those who strive only to render themselves singular, who are really less afflicted than whimsical; rather officious than observing. These would tire us with the avowal of their love of mankind, if they did not deem that they render themselves more piquant and original by declaring that they hate them.

I do not propose to discuss the question whether man is born virtuous? But as he advances in life, nature arranges every thing around him in such a manner, as ought to render him so. A mother is the first object which is presented to his view. The first words which he hears express the tenderest affection. Caresses inspire his first sentiments; and his first occupations are sports.

Too soon, it is true, very different objects surround him. As he grows into life, he is struck with such a general spectacle of injustice, as reverses his ideas, and sours his character. But, although the contagion reaches him, and the passions and prejudices degrade him, some feelings of respect to what is right and good will always remain in his heart.

Even those terrible enthusiasts, who thrust themselves forward in the effervescence of party, who kindle the flame of civil discord, and with an unshrinking hand raise the sword of proscription, these fanatics may be strangers to every humane

sentiment. Yet many of them are seen to love their wives and children with tenderness, and to preserve in the bosom of their family, so to speak, the germs of better things ; and even tyrants have their days of clemency.

During great calamities, natural sentiments develop themselves, and form a touching contrast with the scenes of horror with which they are surrounded. When a destructive conflagration is sweeping along a city, there are no distinctions, no animosities among the wretched sufferers, whom the same terror pursues. Enemies forget their hatred, and partisans their parties. The rich and poor cry out together. All love and aid each other. Misfortune has broken down the separating barriers of pride and prejudice, and they find each other disposed, at least for a season, to what they ought.

Even upon the theatre of war, where the spectacle of destruction excites an appetite to destroy, we often discover affecting traces of humanity. At the seige of Mentz, in 1795, I remember that the advanced guards of the attack on the left, occupied an English garden, near the village of Montback. The garden was completely destroyed. The walks and labyrinths were changed, by the trampling of the soldiers, into high roads. Batteries were raised upon the mounds, from distance to distance, around which still grew rare trees and

shrubs. The French bivouacs banished the verdure of the bowling-greens; and in advance of them, a half-overtured kiosk served for the front guard of the Austrians. The nearest water was on their side; the nearest wood on the side of the French. To obtain water, the French threw their canteens to the Austrians, who filled them and sent them back again. When night drew on, the French soldiers, in return, cut wood for the Austrians, and dragged faggots between the videttes of the two armies. Thus, waiting the signal to cut each other's throat, the advanced guards lived in peace, and made exchanges like those between friendly people. This spectacle excited in me a profound emotion; and I was scarcely able to refrain from tears, in seeing men so situated, somewhat alive to the calls of humanity.

This incident is a singularly touching one. In what a cruel light does it place the character and passions of princes, generals, conquerors, and warriors, who for their measureless cupidity, or the whim of their ambition, have used their fellow men, formed with natural sympathies to aid and love each other, as the mechanical engines of their purposes, to meet breast to breast as enemies, and plunge the murderous steel into each other's hearts! Hence, rivers of life-blood have flowed as uselessly as rain falls upon the ocean! It is difficult to

determine whether we ought most to execrate the cursed ambition of the few, or despise the weak stupidity of the many who have been led, unresistingly, like animals to the slaughter, only the more firmly to rivet the chains of the survivors. What a view does war present, of the miserable ignorance, the brute stupidity, of the mass of the species, and the detestable passions of those called the great, in all time ! Who does not exult to see the era, every day approaching, when men will be too wise, too vigilant and careful of their rights to become instruments in the hands of others ; when the rational consciousness of their own predominant physical power shall be guided by wisdom, self-watchfulness and self-respect ? Then, instead of being tamely led out to slay each other, when invoked to this detestable sport of kings, they will show their steel to their oppressors.

Under oppression, in degradation, in slavery, men still preserve some impress of their first dignity. Those outrages which inflict personal humiliation, are among the most frequent causes of revolutions ; and, perhaps, tyrants incur less danger in shedding the blood of citizens, than in insulting them. An outrage upon a woman was the signal of the liberty of Rome. A similar crime drew on the fall of the Pisistrati, who had found no obstacle in overturning the laws of their country.

The Swiss and Danes supported the rigours of a tyrannic yoke in silence. They arose the first day in which their oppressors exacted of them an act of degradation. Genoa had been conquered. An Austrian officer struck a man of the lower class. The indignant Genoese flew to arms, and drove away their conquerors.

A convincing demonstration, that an innate principle of elevation exists in the soul, results from the universality of religious ideas. Man is discouraged by his errors, his infirmities and faults in vain. An interior voice admonishes him of his high destination. He raises his voice to him over the tombs of his fathers ; and not only so, but very frequently, if he thinks as he ought, every day of his life. When the contemplation of the works of the Eternal has inspired him with humble sentiments of himself, he still deems himself superior to all the beings that surround him. Occupying but a point on the globe, his disquieting thoughts embrace the universe. He beholds time devouring the objects of his affections, crumbling monuments, and overturning even the works of nature ; from the midst of the ruins he aspires to immortality.

To me it appears that religion springs not, as some suppose, from tradition ; or, as others think, from reasoning. It is a sentiment. It is an inwrought feeling in our mental constitution, an

unwritten, universal, and everlasting gospel, pointing to God and immortality. Bring the most uninstructed peasant, who has seen nothing of the earth, but its plains, in sight of Chimborazo. The thrill of awe and sublimity that springs within him at the view, and lifts his spirit above the summits to the divinity, is one of the forms, in which this sentiment acts. The natural mental movements in view of the illimitable main, of the starry firmament, of elevated mountains, of whatever is vast in dimension, irresistible in power, terrible in the exercise of anger; in short, all those emotions, which we call the sublime, are modified actings of the religious sentiment.

What would not these sentiments, at once elevated and good, these precious germs produce, were they developed by happy circumstances! That they exist in the human bosom is a sufficient indication that we owe a tender interest to the being who possesses them. Let us love our kind, and cultivate the virtues which render us worthy of their affection.

CHAPTER XII.

OF SOME OF THE VIRTUES

PLACED in the midst of men, one of the most useful virtues is indulgence. To allow ourselves to become severe, is to forget how many good qualities we want ourselves; and from what faults we are preserved only by our circumstances, and the restraining providence of God. It is to forget the weakness of men, and the empire exercised over them by the objects that surround them. To render exact justice to our kind, we ought to take into the estimate all the assistance and all the obstacles, with which they have met in their career. Thus weighing them, celebrated actions will become less astonishing, and many faults will appear much more venial.

By cultivating the spirit of indulgence, we learn the happy secret of being well with ourselves, and

well with men. Some carry into their intercourse with the world an austere frankness. They are dreaded, and the opposition which they every day experience, increases their disagreeable and tiresome rudeness. Others, blushing at no complaisance, and equally supple and false, smile at what displeases them ; praise what they feel to be ridiculous ; and applaud what they know to be vile. Be kind, whilst you ever frown on what is vicious, and you will not sacrifice self-esteem ; and your frankness, far from annoying, will render your affability more amiable.

The less we occupy ourselves with the vices and aberrations of men, unless it be to reform them, and of course, to make them happier, the more pleasant will our existence become.

Let us extend a courageous indulgence towards those unfortunate beings who are victims of long-continued errors. Enough will be ready to assume the office of their accusers. Let us draw round them the veil of charity. I am aware that gloomy moralists will object to these views ; and call them easy principles, that encourage the vices, flatter the passions, and excuse disorders. Believe me, the most easy and successful mode of reclaiming the wandering, is to carry encouragement and hope to their hearts, and to confide in their professions of repentance. Few things, in my estimate, more

decidedly mark a generous and noble, as well as an enlightened and a philosophic spirit, as the disposition to be indulgent in its construction of the views and conduct of others, and to view our fellow men with kindness and compassion. Great minds fail not to be conscious what a weak, miserable compound of vanity, ignorance and selfishness is that lord of the creation which we call man. As the human mind is exalted by its elevation towards the divinity, in the same proportion it soars above the mists of its own passions and prejudices; and, whilst it must ever censure what is really wrong, yet sees much in humanity to inspire feelings of compassion and benevolence.

Born in an age when every one professes to applaud toleration, far from adopting the real spirit, we scarcely know how to practise indulgence even towards abstract opinions, that differ from our own. Let us never forget the weakness and error of our own judgment and understanding; and then we shall possess an habitual temper of candour towards the views of others. In most instances, when we say "that man thinks rightly," the phrase, when translated, imports, "that man thinks as I do."

A particular idea, which you formerly deemed correct, at present seems false. Perhaps you may one day return to your first judgment. Let us accord, to our antagonist, a right which we fre-

quently exercise for ourselves, the right to be deceived. During the contests of party, I have more than once seen the spectacle of two men changing their principles almost at the same moment, in such a manner, that one of them takes the place of the other in the faction, which, but a short time since, he professed to detest. Taking human nature as it is, into view, this does not astonish me. What I find strange is, that these two men should hate each other more than ever, and that it has become impossible to reconcile them, now that the one has espoused the opinion which the other held but a moment before.

It is very true, that the age of actual persecution, by fines, imprisonment and death, is gone by. But this results rather from a progress of practical political ideas, than from a settled conviction that no one mind has a right to find, in the opinions of another mind, cause of offence. Whoever cannot look upon the most opposite faith and opinions of his neighbour, in religion, in politics, and the ordinary concerns of life, without any feeling of temper and bitterness, in view of that difference, is in heart and spirit intolerant. In this view, who can justly and fully lay claim to toleration? The whole world is divided into parties, often finding the bitterest germs of contention in the smallest differences. Scarcely one in ten thousand, of all

these sects and parties, has real philosophic magnanimity enough to perceive, that all other men have as much claim for indulgence to their opinions, as he exacts for his own.

An essential truth that ought to be constantly announced, is, that both political and religious opinions have much less influence than is commonly imagined upon the qualities of the heart. No verity has been so completely demonstrated to my conviction. I have been conversant with men of all parties. In every one I have met with persons full of disinterestedness and integrity. To esteem them, it was only necessary to remark the noble and unshrinking courage with which they were willing to suspend every thing on the issue of their convictions.

A crowd of useful reflections upon this subject naturally offer, upon which it would be easy to enlarge. The brevity of my plan impels me to other subjects. There is one quality, difficult to define, yet easily understood, which always affects us pleasantly. It is a quality as rare as its effects are useful; and yet we have scarcely a specific term in our language by which fully to designate it. An obliging disposition is the common phrase that conveys it. Examine all the pleasant things of life, and you will find this disposition the pleasantest of all. There often remains no memory of

the benefits received. Of those we have rendered, something is always retained.

But what shall we say of the ungrateful? We are told that they are formidable from their numbers and boldness, and that they people the whole earth. How eccentric and contradictory are the common maxims of the world! We admit that we have a right to exact gratitude! and yet wish that benefits should be forgotten: I hold it wrong to depend upon gratitude, since the expectation will generally be deceived. To remember that we have been the means of doing good in time past, is to bind us to beneficence in time to come. We hear it continually repeated, that it requires a sublime effort to do good to our enemies. Men, more zealous than enlightened, have advanced, that the morality of the gospel has alone prescribed the rendering of good for evil. Evangelical duty is sufficiently elevated by being founded on the basis of higher sanctions, and a future retribution; and rests not its claims, though it possesses them, upon new discoveries of what is true, beautiful, and obligatory in morals.

Some of the heathen writers had not failed to enjoin it upon the members of communities, to aid and love one another. But it is only necessary to glance upon the apostolic epistles, to see that Christians were a new and peculiar people, bound

together by cords of affection, altogether unknown in the previous records of the human heart. What tenderness, what love, "stronger than death," what sublime disinterestedness! How reckless the sordid motives of ambition and interest, which ruled the surrounding world! We scarcely need other evidence, that this simplicity of love, so unlike aught the world had seen before, was not an affection of earthly mould; and that this new people were not bound together by ties which had an entire relation to the grossness of earthly bonds. To me there is something inexpressibly delightful, and of which I am never weary, in contemplating the originality and simplicity of early Christian affection, nor is it one of the feeblest testimonies to the glory and divinity of the gospel.

Let us add, that in enjoining the gospel maxim *to render good for evil*, we inculcate elevation of mind, the source of many virtues. But christian moralists have too often been tempted to neutralize or destroy the effect of their precepts, by pushing them to absurd or impracticable lengths. To practise forgiveness, and to do good, are evangelical commands, as sublime as they are conformable to our natural views of duty. To enjoin upon us to degrade ourselves in the estimate of our enemies, by feeling and acting towards them as though they were our friends, as some have understood the

bearing of the Christian precept, would be injurious and impracticable. Socrates pardoned his enemies, but preserved an imposing dignity. There was no abasement in the infinitely higher example of him, who, suffering on the cross, prayed for his murderers.

If such are our obligations as men and Christians towards our enemies, what duties ought we not to fulfil to those benefactors who have steadily sought occasions to be useful to us, to ward off danger from us, and to repair our misfortunes? To such let us seek incessant opportunities of acquitting our debt. Gratitude will prolong the pleasure conferred by their benefits.

Indulgence and the desire to oblige, seem to me the two principal means of conciliating to ourselves the affections of our kind. A virtue which at least commands their esteem is integrity. Not only is he who practises it, faithful to his engagements, since he allows no promises of his to be held slight, but his uprightness makes itself felt in all his actions. The faults that he commits he is prompt to acknowledge; he confesses them without false shame, and seeks neither to exaggerate nor extenuate them. Touching the interests which are common to him and other people, he decides for simple justice; and, in so awarding, does not deem that he injures himself, his first possession being

his own self-respect. Without rendering me high services, he obliges me in the lesser charities, and procures me one of the most vivid pleasures I can taste, that of contemplating a noble character.

Among the virtues which ought to secure a kind regard, we universally assign to modesty a high rank. A simple and modest man lives unknown, until a moment, which he could not have foreseen, reveals his estimable qualities, and his generous actions. I compare him to the flower concealed springing from an humble stem, which escapes the view, and is discovered only by its fragrance. Pride quickly fixes the eye, and he who is always his own eulogist, dispenses every other person from the obligation to praise him. A truly modest man, emerging from his transient obscurity, will obtain those delightful praises which the heart awards without effort. His superiority, far from being importunate, will become attractive. Modesty gives to talents and virtues the same charm which chastity adds to beauty.

Let us carry into the world neither curiosity nor indiscretion. Curiosity is the defect of a little mind, which, not knowing how to employ itself at home, feels the necessity of being amused with the occupations of others. In relation to minute objects it is ridiculous. In important affairs it becomes odious. Let us know nothing about those

debates, piques and parties, which it is not in our power to settle; practically observing the precept of the Scriptures, "Mind your own business."

A gentle and constant equality of temper, is an attribute so precious, that, in my eye, it becomes a virtue. To sustain it, not only requires a pure mind, but a vigour of understanding which resists the petty vexations and fleeting contrarieties which a multitude of objects and events are continually bringing. What an unalterable charm does it give to the society of the man who possesses it! How is it possible to avoid loving him whom we are certain always to find with serenity upon his brow, and a smile in his countenance? Among the circumstances essential to felicity, I count the attachment of some individuals, but not popularity.

CHAPTER XIII.

OF MARRIAGE.

SINCE we cannot assure ourselves of the general affection, nor even of the justice of men, it becomes our interest, in the midst of the great mass that we cannot move, to create a little world, which we can arrange at the disposal of our reason and affections.

In this retreat, dictated to us alike by our instincts and our hearts, let us forget the chimeras which the crowd pursue; and if the men of fashion, and the world ridicule, and even condemn us, let their murmurs sound in our ears as the dashing of the waves on the distant shore, to the stranger, under the hospitable roof which shelters him from the storm.

The universe of reason and affection must be composed of a single family. Of that universe a

wedded pair must be the centre. A wife is the best and the only disinterested friend, by the award of nature. She remains such, when fortune has scattered all others. How many have been recalled to hope by a virtuous and affectionate wife, when all beside had been lost ! How many, retrieved from despondency, have felt in an ineffable effusion of heart, that her heroism and constancy were an ample indemnity for the deprivation of all other things ! How many, undeceived by external illusions, have in this way been brought home to their real good ! If we wish to see the attributes of conjugal heroism, in their purest brilliancy, let us suppose the husband in the last degree of wretchedness. Let us imagine him not only culpable, but so estimated, and an outcast from society. Repentance itself, in the view of candour, has not been available to cloak his faults. She alone, accusing him not, is only prodigal of consolations. Embracing duties as severe as his reverses, she voluntarily shares his captivity or exile. He finds still, on the faithful bosom of innocence, a refuge, where remorse becomes appeased ; as in former days, the proscribed found, at the foot of the altar, an assylum against the fury of men.

Marriage is generally assumed as a means of increasing credit and fortune, and of assuring success in the world. It should be undertaken as a

chief element of happiness, in the retirement of domestic repose. I would wish that my disciple, while still in the freshness of youth, might have reason and experience enough to select the beloved person whom he would desire one day to espouse. I would hope that, captivated with her dawning qualities, and earnestly seeking her happiness, he might win her tenderness, and find his satisfaction in training her to a conformity to his tastes, habits, and character.

The freshness of her docile nature demands his first forming cares. As she advances in life she is moulded to happy changes, adapted to supply his defects. She is reared modest, amiable, well-informed, respectable, and respected; one day to govern his family, and direct his house, by diffusing around the domestic domain, order and peace. Let neither romances, metaphysics, pedantry, nor fashion, render a qualification for these important duties, either trifling or vulgar in her view. Still, domestic duties are by no means to occupy all her hours. The time which is not devoted to them will flow quietly on in friendly circles, not numerous, but animated by gaiety, friendship, and the inexplicable pleasures which spring from intercourse with rational society. There are, also, more unimportant duties, which we expect her not to neglect. We wish her to occupy some moments at her

toilette ; where simplicity should be the basis of elegance ; and where native tact might develop the graces, and vary, and multiply, if I may so say, the forms of her beauty. In fine, the versatility of her modes of rendering herself agreeable, should render it impossible to be unhappy in her presence.

But train women to visit a library as *savans*, and they will be likely to bring from it pedantry without solid instruction ; and coquetry without feminine amiability. I would not be understood to question the capability of the female understanding. I am not sure that I would wish the wife of my friend to have been an author, though some of the most amiable and enlightened women have been such. But I deem that in their mental constitution, and in the assignment of their lot, providence has designated them to prefer the graces to erudition ; and that to acquire a wreath of laurels, they must ordinarily relinquish their native crown of roses.

When we see a husband and wife thus united by tenderness, good tempers, and simple tastes, every thing presages for them a delightful futurity. Let them live contented in their retirement. Instead of wishing to blazon, let them conceal their happiness, and exist for each other. Life will become to them the happiest of dreams.

Too often, the deciding motive both with parents and young persons, in relation to marriage, is in-

terest. When a man marries simply on a money speculation, if he sees his fortune and distinction secured, let disorder and alienation reign in his house as they may, he is still happier than he deserves to be.

Some marriages of inclination guarantee happiness no more than our marriages of interest. What results should be anticipated from the blind impulse of appetite? Let there be mutual affection, such as reason can survey with a calm and severe scrutiny. Such love as is painted in romances is but a fatal fever. It is children alone who believe themselves in love, only when they feel themselves in a delirium. They have imagined that life should be a continued exstasy; and these indulged dreams of anticipation spoil the reality of wedded life. I have supposed the husband older than his wife. I have imagined him forming the character of his young, fair and docile companion; and that, so to speak, they have become assimilated to each other's tastes and habits. The right combination of reason and love assures for them, under such circumstances, as much as possible, a futurity of happiness.

I have often heard men who were sensible upon every other subject, express their conviction that the Orientals, in excluding their women from all eyes but their own, had established the only

reasonable domestic policy. There is no more good sense than humanity in this barbarous sentiment, however frequently it is uttered. No one could be in earnest, in wishing to copy, into free institutions, this appalling vestige of slavery. But my inward respect for women withholds me from flattering them. Authority ought to belong to the husband; and the influence of tenderness, graces and the charms of constancy, gentleness and truth, constitute the appropriate female empire, and belong of right to the wife. Masculine vigour, and aptitude to contend and resist, clearly indicate that nature has confided authority to man. To dispossess him of it, and control him by a still more irresistible sway, it is necessary that the feeble sex should learn patience, docility, passive courage, and the management of their appropriate weapons in danger and sorrow; and that they should become energetic in the discharge of the cares of the domestic establishment. Man is formed by nature for the calls of active courage; and woman, for the appalling scenes of pain and affliction, and the agony of the sick and dying bed. In a word, all argument apart, nature has clearly demonstrated to which sex authority belongs.

The defects of man spring from the tendency of his natural traits, in which force predominates, to run to excess. I see his gentle companion endowed

with attributes and qualities naturally tending to temper his imperfections. The means she has received to reach this end announce that it is the purpose of heaven that she should use them with this view. She has charms which, when rightly applied, none can resist. Her character is a happy compound of sensibility, and wisdom. She has superadded a felicity of address which she owes to her organization, and which the reserve, that her education imposes, serves to develop. Thus the qualities, and even the imperfections of the two sexes serve to bring them together. It follows, that man should possess authority, and woman influence, for their mutual happiness.

When the wife dictates, I cease to behold a respectable married pair. I see a ridiculous tyrant, and a still more ridiculous slave. It is vain to urge that she may be most capable of authority, and that her orders may be conformable to wisdom and justice. They are absurd, from the very circumstance that they are commands. The virtues which the husband ought to practise towards his wife must have their origin in love, which can only be inspired, and which flies all restraint. In a single position, the wife honours herself in assuming authority. It is when reverses have overwhelmed and desolated her husband, so that, ceasing to sustain her, and changing the natural order of things, she supports

him. He receives hope as her gift ; he is compelled to blush in imitating her example of courage ; but she aspires to this power no longer than to be able to restore him to the place whence misery had cast him down.

It is a truth that is indisputable, that dissatisfied husbands and wives often love each other more than they imagine. Suppose them to believe themselves indifferent ; and to seem so ; and even on the verge of mutual hate ; should one of them fall sick, we see the other inspired with sincere alarms. Suppose them on the eve of separation ; when the fatal moment comes, both recoil from the act. Habit almost causes the pains, to which we have been long accustomed, to become cause of regret when they cease. When the two begin mutually to complain of their destiny, I counsel each, instead of wishing to criminate and correct each other, to give each other an example of mutual forbearance and indulgence. It may be, that the cause of their mutual dissatisfaction is unreal ; the supposed wrong not intended, the suspicion false. Candour and forgiveness will appease all. The husband may have gone astray only in thought. The wife may have minor defects, and an unequal temper, without forfeiting much excellence and still remaining claims to be loved. The morbid influence of ill health, and its oftentimes irresistible action upon the tem-

per, may have been the source whence the faults flowed on either part; and the mutual wrongs may thus have been, in some sense, independent of the will of the parties. Bound, as they are, in such intimate and almost indissoluble relations, before they give that happiness, which they hoped and promised, to the winds, let them exhaust their efforts of self-command and mutual indulgence, to rekindle the lamp of genuine affection.

A part of the purest happiness which earth yields, is unquestionably, the portion of two beings wisely and fitly united in the bonds of indissoluble confidence and affection. What a touching picture does Madame de Stael present to us, where she says, "I saw, during my sojourn in England, a man of the highest merit united to a wife worthy of him. One day, as we were walking together, we met some of those people that the English call gipseys, who generally wander about the woods in the most deplorable condition. I expressed pity for them thus enduring the union of all the physical evils of nature. 'Had it been necessary,' said the husband, pointing to his wife, 'in order to spend my life with her, that I should have passed thirty years in begging, we should still have been happy.' 'Yes,' replied the wife, 'the happiest of beings.' "

CHAPTER XIV.

CHILDREN.

ONE of the happiest days, and one of the most delightful of life, is when the birth of a child opens the heart of the parent to emotions as yet unknown. Yet what pains are prepared for us by this circumstance! What anxiety, what agonies their sufferings excite! What terror, when we fear for their infant life! And these alarms terminate not with their early age. The inquietude with which parents watch over the destiny of children, fills every period of life, even to the last sigh.

The compensating satisfaction which they bring must be very vivid, since it counterbalances so many sufferings. In order to love them, we have no need to be convinced that they will respond to our cares, and one day repay them. If there be in the human heart one disinterested sentiment, it is

parental love. Our tenderness for our children is independent of reflection. We love them because they are our children. Their existence makes a part of ours; or rather, is more than ours. All that is either useful or pleasant to them, brings us a pure happiness, springing from their health, their gaiety, and their amusements.

The chief end which we ought to propose to ourselves, in rearing them, is to train and dispose them so that they may wisely enjoy that existence which is accorded them. Of all the happy influences which can be brought to bear upon their mind and manners, few are more beneficial than the example of parental gentleness. But there are minds which see only the inconveniences which accompany it. We hear people regretting the decline of the severity of ancient education; and maintaining the wisdom of those contrarieties and vexations which children used to experience; "a fitting discipline of preparation," say they, "to prepare them for the sorrows of life." Would they, on the same principle, inflict bruises and contusions, to train them to the right endurance of those that carelessness or accident might bring? "It is an advantage," say they, "to put them to an apprenticeship of pain at the period when the sorrow it inflicts is light and transient." This mode of speaking, with many others of similar import, pre-

sents a combination of much error with some truth. The sufferings of childhood seem to us trifling and easy to endure, because time has interposed distance between them and us; and we have no fear of ever meeting them again. Yet it does not cease to be a fact, that the child that passes a year under the discipline of the ferule of a severe master, is as unhappy as a man deprived a year of his liberty. The latter, in truth, has less reason to complain; since he ought to find, in the discipline of his reason and his maturity and force of character, more powerful motives for patient endurance. Parents, Providence has placed the destiny of your children in your hands. When you thus sacrifice the present to an uncertain future, you ought to have strong proof that you will put at their disposal the means of indemnification. If the sacrifice of the present to the future were indispensable, I would not dissuade from it. But my conviction is, that the best means of preparing them for the future may be found in rendering them as happy as possible for the present. If it should be your severe trial to be deprived of them in their early days, you will, at least, have the consolation of being able to say, "I have rendered them happy during the short time they were confided to me." Strive then, by gentleness, guided by wisdom and authority, to cast the sunshine of enjoyment upon

the necessary toils and studies of the morning of their existence.

It is the stern award of nature to bring them sorrows. Our task is to soothe them. I feel an interest when I see the child regret the trinket it has broken, or the bird it has reared. Nature in this way gives them the first lessons of pain, and strengthens them to sustain the more bitter losses of maturer days. Let us prudently second the efforts of nature; and to console the weeping child, let us not attempt to change the course of these fugitive ideas, nor to efface the vexation by a pleasure. In unavoidable suffering, let the dawning courage and reason find strength for endurance. Let us first share the regrets, and gently bring the sufferer to feel the inutility of tears. Let us accustom him not to throw away his strength in useless efforts; and let us form his mind to bear without a murmur the yoke of necessity. These maxims, I am aware, are directly against the spirit of modern education, which is almost entirely directed towards the views of ambition.

But while I earnestly inculcate gentleness in parental discipline, I would not confound it with weakness. I disapprove that familiarity between parents and children which is unfavourable to subordination. Fashion is likely to introduce an injurious equality into this relation. I see the

progress of this dangerous effeminacy with regret. The dress and expenditures which would formerly have supplied ten children, scarcely satisfy at present the caprices of one. This foolish complaisance of parents prepares, for the future husbands and wives, a task most difficult to fulfil. Let us not, by anticipating and preventing the wishes of children, teach them to be indolent in searching for their own pleasures. Their age is fertile in this species of invention. That they may be successful in seizing enjoyment, little more is requisite to be performed, on our part, than to break their chains.

There are two fruitful sources of torments for children. One is, what the present day denominates politeness. It is revolting to me to see children early trained to forego their delightful frankness and simplicity, and learning artificial manners. We wish them to become little personages, and we compel them to receive tiresome compliments, and to repeat insignificant formulas of common-place flattery. In this way, politeness, destined to impart amenity to life, becomes a source of vexation and restraint. It would seem as if we thought it so important a matter to teach the usages of society, that they could never be known unless the study were commenced in infancy. Besides, do we flatter ourselves, that we

shall be able to teach children the modes and the vocabulary of politeness, without initiating them, at the same time, in the rudiments of falsehood? They are compelled to see that we consider it a trifle. If we wish them to become flatterers and dishonest, I ask, what more efficient method could we take?

Labour is the second source of their sufferings. I would by no means be understood to dissuade from the assiduous cultivation of habits of industry. You may enable children to remove mountains, if you will contrive to render their tasks a matter of amusement and interest. The extreme curiosity of children announces an instinctive desire for instruction. But instead of profiting by it, we adopt measures which tend to stifle it. We render their studies tiresome, and then say that the young naturally tire of study.

When the parent is sufficiently enlightened to rear his child himself, instead of plying him with rudimental books, dictionaries and restraint, let him impart the first instructions by familiar conversation. Ideas advanced in this way are accommodated to the comprehension of the pupil, by mutual good feeling rendered attractive, and brought directly within the embrace of his mind. This instruction leads him to observe, and accustoms him to compare, reflect and discriminate,

offers the sciences under interesting associations, and inspires a natural thirst for instruction. Of all results which education can produce, this is the most useful. A youth of fifteen, trained in this way, will come into possession of more truths, mixed with fewer errors, than much older persons reared in the common way. He will be distinguished by the early maturity of his reason, and by his eagerness to cultivate the sciences, which, instead of producing fatigue or disgust, will every day give birth to new ideas and new pleasures. I am nevertheless little surprised, that the scrupulous advocates of the existing routine should insist that such a method tends to form superficial thinkers. I can only say to these profound panegyrists of the present order of instruction, that the method which I recommend, was that of the Greeks. Their philosophers taught while walking in the shade of the portico or of trees, and were ignorant of the art of rendering study tiresome, and not disposed to throw over it the benefits of constraint. Modern instructors ought, therefore, to find that they were shallow reasoners, and that their poets and artists could have produced only crude and unfinished efforts.

Besides, this part of education is of trifling importance, compared with the paramount obligation to give the pupil robust health, pure morals, and

an energetic mind. I deeply regret that the despotic empire of opinion is more powerful than paternal love. Instead of gravely teaching to your son the little arts of shining in the world, have the courage to say to him, "Oblige your friends whose sufferings you can lighten, and exhibit a constant and universal example of good morals. Form, every evening, projects necessary for enjoying a happy and useful succeeding day." Thus you will see him useful, good and happy, if not great in the world's estimation. You will behold him peacefully descending the current of time. In striking the balance with life, he will be able to say, "I have known only those sufferings which no wisdom could evade, and no efforts repel,

Is not that filial ingratitude, of which parents so generally complain, the bitter fruit of their own training? You fill their hearts with mercenary passions, and with measureless ambition. You break the tenderest ties, and send them to distant public schools. Your children, in turn, put your lessons to account, and abandon your importunate and declining age, if you depend on them, to mercenary hands. When they were young, you ridiculed them out of their innocent frankness and want of worldly wisdom. You vaunted to them that ambition and those arts of rising, which, put in practice, have steeled their hearts against filial

piety, as well as the other affections that belong not to calculation. Since the paramount object of your training was to teach them to shine, and make the most out of every body, you have at least a right to expect from their vanity, pompous funeral solemnities. I revere that indication of infinite wisdom, that has rendered the love of the parent more anxious and tender than that of the child. The intensity of the affections ought to be proportionate to the wants of the beings that excite them. But ingratitude is not always in nature. Better training would have produced other manners. In rearing our children with more enlightened care, in inspiring them with moderate desires, in reducing their eagerness for brilliancy and distinction, we shall render them happy, without stifling their natural filial sentiments ; and we shall thus use the best means of training them to sustain and soothe our last moments, as we embellished their first days.

CHAPTER XV.

OF FRIENDSHIP.

LET us bring within the family circle a few persons of amiable manners and simple tastes. Our domestic retreat may then become our universe. But we must search for real friends, with capabilities for continuing such. If interest and pleasure break the accidental ties of a day, shall friendship, which was always a stranger to the connexion, be accused of the infraction ?

A real friend must not be expected from the common ties of vulgar interest ; but must be, in the circle to which he belongs, as a brother of adoption. So simple should be our confidence in the entireness of his affection, and the disinterestedness and wisdom of his advice, as to incline us to consult him without afflicting our wife or children by a useless communication of our perplexities.

To him we should be able to confide our fears; and while we struggle, by his advice and aid to escape the pressing evil which menaces to overwhelm us, our family may still repose in tranquil security.

If he suffer in turn, we share his pains. If he have pleasures, we reciprocally enjoy them. If either party experience reverses, instead of finding himself alone in misery, he receives consolations so touching and tender, that he ceases to complain of a lot which has enabled him to become acquainted with the depth of the resources of friendship.

How pure is the sentiment, how simple the pleasures, which flow from the intercourse of two persons united by similar opinions and like desires, who have both cultivated letters, the arts, and true wisdom! With what rapidity the moments of these charming conversations fly! Even the hours consecrated to study are less pleasant, perhaps less instructive. Such a friend, so to speak, is of a different nature from that of the rest of men. They either conceal our defects, or cause us to see them from motives of ill-feeling. A friend so discusses them, in our presence, as not to wound us. He kindly reproaches us with faults, to our face, which he extenuates, or excuses before others in our absence. We can never fully comprehend to what extent a friend may be useful and dear,

until after having been a long time the faithful companion of his good and evil fortune. What emotions we experience in giving ourselves up to the remembrance of the common perils, storms, and trials we have experienced together! It is never without tenderness of heart that we say, "We have had the same thoughts, affections, and hopes. Such an event penetrated us with common joy; such another filled us with grief. Uniting our efforts, we rescued a victim of poverty and misfortune. We mutually shared his tears of gratitude. The hard necessity of circumstances separated us; and our paths so diverged that seas and mountains divided us. But we still remained present to each other, in communion of thought. He had fears for me, and I for him, as we foresaw each other's dangers. Finally, we met again; what charms, what effusion of heart in the union!"

I immediately form a high opinion of the man, whom I hear earnest in the applause of the talents or virtues of his friend. He possesses the qualities which he applauds; since he has need to affirm their existence in the person he loves,

This noble and pure sentiment has had its pacific heroes. What names, what examples could I not cite, in ancient and in modern times! What splendid and affecting proofs of identity of fortune, joys, and sorrows, and even danger and death! I knew

two friends, of whom every one spoke with respect. One of them was asked the extent of his fortune? "Mine is small," he replied, "but my friend is rich." The other, a few days before he died of a contagious disease, asked, "Why so many persons were allowed to enter his chamber? No one," he added, "ought to be admitted but my friend." Thus they were one in fortune, in life, and in death.

I deem, that even moralists have sought to render this gentle affection, and the only one exempt from storms, too exclusive. I am aware, how much our affections become enfeebled, in proportion as their objects multiply. There is force in the quaint expression of an old author. "Love is like a large stream, which bears heavy laden boats. Divide it into many channels, and they run a-ground." Still, we may give the honoured name of friend to several, without profaning it, if there exist between us mutual sympathy, high esteem, and tender interest; if our pleasures and pains are in some sense, common stock, and we are reciprocally capable of a sincere devotion to each other's welfare. As much, however, as I revere the real sentiments, I am disgusted by the sickly or exaggerated affectation of it.

The sentiment is still more delightful, when inspired by the softer sex. I shall be asked, if it

can exist in its purity between persons of the different sexes? I answer in the affirmative, when the impulses of youth no longer agitate the heart. We then experience the whole charm of the sentiment, as the difference of sex which is never entirely forgotten, imparts to it a vague and touching tenderness, and an ideal delight for which language is too poor to furnish terms.

Why can love and friendship, the sunshine of existence, decay in the heart? Why are they not eternal? But since it is not so, if we are cruelly deceived in our affections, the surest means of medicating our pain is, instead of cherishing misanthropic distrust, to look round, and form the same generous ties anew. Has your friend abandoned you? or, worse, has your wife become unworthy of your love? It is better to be deceived a thousand times, than to add to the grief of wounded affection, the insupportable burden of general distrust, misanthropy, and hatred. Let these baneful feelings never usurp the place of those sentiments which must constitute human happiness. Pardon your professed friends the sorrows, which their unkindness may have caused you, in consideration of those days of the past which were embellished by their friendship.

But these treasons and perfidies are only frequent in the intercourse of those who are driven

about by the whirlwinds of life ; in which so many opposing interests, so many deceitful pleasures confuse and separate men. The simple minded and good, whose days flow pleasantly in retreat, every day value more the price of those ties that unite them. Their happiness is veiled and guaranteed by obscurity.

I give place to none of the illusions of inexperience in regard to men. The errors, contradictions, and vices with which they are charged, exist. I admit that many satires are faithful paintings. But there are still to be found, everywhere, persons whose manners are frank, whose heart is kind, and whose temper amiable. These persons exist in sufficient numbers to compose this new world of which I have spoken. Writers are disposed to declaim against men. I have never ceased to feel good-will towards my kind. I have chosen only to withdraw from the multitude, in order to select my position in the centre of a small society.

I wish those, most dear to me, implicitly to believe in friendship. I would a thousand times prefer, that they should err on the side of credulity, than of suspicion and distrust. I consider real misanthropy a great misfortune. I would rather my children should meet with treachery and inconstancy every day of their lives, than resign themselves to the heartless persuasion, weakly considered

an attribute of wisdom and greatness, that men are altogether selfish, and unworthy of confidence. This principle invests the world in darkness, which “may be felt;” and, by an energetic bearing on all the faculties and sources of feeling, causes the heart, that entertains such views, to become what it believes to be the character of the species.

No scruples of false decorum shall withhold me from saying, that I have seen friendship, pure, holy, disinterested, akin to that of the angelic beings; nay, more,—have been myself the subject of it. My heart swells, and will to its latest pulsation, with the remembered proofs. True, the instances, that have fallen within the compass of my experience, are very few. But they are sufficient to settle my conviction, that the sentiment, which has inspired the enthusiasm of eloquence, painting and song, in all time, is not the illusion of a weak and misguided imagination. Selfish as man is, we often see instances of the most generous and devoted friendship, even in this silver age, the age of revenue and political economy.

While every one is sensible, that there must exist between characters, that are susceptible of all the fidelity and beauty of this sentiment, a certain adaptation of circumstances, and conformity of disposition, mind, development and temperament; I believe with *St. Pierre*, that it is desirable, that

there should be a certain degree of contrast, as well as much similarity. The same opinions, tastes, tempers and views have been found by experience, sometimes not to generate the most permanent, and pleasant friendships. The moral, as well as the physical appetite, at times grows weary of perpetual uniformity and unvarying likeness, and requires the spice, afforded by the mixture of various ingredients of affectionate contrariety. "Soldiers," says St. Pierre, "on long and distant expeditions, should be associated with ministers, lawyers with naturalists, and in general, the strongest contrasts of profession,"—"all nature's discord thus making all nature's peace." But I am perfectly aware, that there will be great danger of making fatal mistakes, in acting on this principle. It is true in the abstract; but let sentimentalists beware of trenching too confidently on ground, where the limits between safety and ruin are so narrow and so difficult. Doves of a different feather may pair happily, but not doves and vultures. There must be a certain compatibility not only of character, but of age, condition and circumstances, as we are broadly instructed in the fable of the frog thinking to wed with the ox.

The fame and character of the one are strictly the property of the other. Let no one who has the least particle of the base alloy of envy in his

feelings towards him whom he calls his friend, who is willing to hear and countenance abatements of his qualities, talents, or virtues, dare to assume that almost sacred name. He is equally unworthy of it, if he stand by in neutrality when calumny is busily passing against him; and still more, if by smiles he gives his countenance, and half his consent, to the story of detraction and abatement. It is a forfeiture of the right to the name, though it may be a less worthy one, to make the person called friend, the subject of jest and ridicule. In regard to all these points, the duties are clear, distinct, palpable, and not to be compromised. Every honourable mind feels, in witnessing any infraction of the laws of equity, or strict justice, a sentiment of recoil and disgust, difficult perhaps to define, but one which instantly designates the person guilty of it, as unworthy of the name of friend. Honest, frank and disinterested advice, especially in relation to concerns of great interest to the party, is a paramount obligation, whether the advised will bear, or forbear. This prerogative may, indeed, be claimed by unfeeling and rude bluntness. But, by a discriminating mind, the suggestions of a counterfeit, will never be mistaken for those of genuine friendship.

The time, the courtesy and the amount of intercourse, due from one friend to another, can never

be brought under subjection to rules. Moral, like physical attraction, acting unconsciously, will regulate this portion of duty, with the unvarying certainty of the laws of nature. If persons, claiming to sustain this relation to each other, do not wish to be as much together, as duty and propriety will admit; if they allow this matter to be settled by the rigid titling of etiquette, they are any thing rather than real friends.

When friends are separated wide from each other by distance, duty, and the stern calls of our pursuits, I admire the custom of baptizing, if I may so say, our remembrances, by giving the names of our dear and distant friends to the hills, valleys, streams, trees or pleasant views in our walks; or the objects most familiar and pleasant to our view. The stern silence of nature may thus be compelled to find a tongue, and discourse with us of those we love.

In a word, the name, I am sensible, is too often a mockery of cold and affected sentimentalism. But the sentiment exists, pure, simple, delightful. Neither fawning, nor cant, nor flattery, nor any mixture of earth's mould makes any part of it. Honourable, dignified, unshaken, it feels its obligations, and discharges them. The reputation, character and whole interest of the friend is its object; and his highest happiness its prayer. In

holy separation from the hollow intercourse, false phrases and deceitful compliments of fashion, and what is called the world, it is faithful and consistent, under all proofs and trials, until death; and when the eyes of the departed are closed, his memory is enshrined in the remembrance of the survivor, Thank God! I have seen, I have felt, that there are such friendships; and if there is any thing honourable, dignified and attractive in aught, that earth presents, it is the sight of two friends, whose attachment dates from their first remembered sentiment; and has survived difference of opinion and interest, the changes of distance, time and disease, and those weaning influences, which while they crumble the most durable monuments, convert most hearts to stone.

I have examined the essential things of life, tranquillity, independence of mind, health, competence, and the affection of some of our kind. I wish now to give my observations something more of detail and diversity. But I wish it still to be borne in mind, that I give only the materials and outlines of an essay, and make no pretensions to fill out a complete treatise. I wish that a temple may be raised to happiness. Hands, more skilful than mine, will rear it. It is sufficient to my purpose to indicate those delightful positions, on the summit of which it may be erected.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE PLEASURES OF THE SENSES.

HEAVEN has decreed, that each one of our senses should be a source of pleasure. But if we seek our enjoyment, only in physical sensations, the same stern arbiter has enacted, that our capability of pleasure should soon be exhausted, and that, palled and disgusted, we should die without having known true happiness.

I have long been in the habit of measuring the character, mental power and prospects of the young, who are brought by circumstances under my observation, by the power which they evince, to resist the suggestion of the senses. In the same proportion, as I see them capable of rising above the thralldom of their appetites, capable of that energy of will, that gives the intellectual control over the animal nature, I graduate them higher in

the scale of moral power and prospect. But if, in their course, they manifest the clear preponderance of the animal ; if sloth, sensuality, and the inclinations, which have no higher origin than the senses, sway them beyond the influence of advice and moral suasion, be they ever so beautiful, endowed, rich, distinguished, be their place in general estimation, ever so high, I put them down as belonging more to the animal, than the intellectual orders of being.

Exactly in proportion as pleasures are less associated with the mind, their power to give us any permanent satisfaction is diminished. On the contrary, they become vivid and durable, precisely in the degree in which they awaken and call forth moral ideas. They become in a measure celestial, when they connect the past with the present, the present with the future, and the whole with heaven.

If we scrutinize the pleasures of the senses, we shall always find their charm increasing in proportion as they rise in the scale of purification, and become transformed, in some sense, to the dignity of moral enjoyments.

I look at a painting ; it represents an old man, a child, a woman giving alms, and a soldier, whose attitude expresses astonishment. I admire the fidelity, the truth and colouring of the picture ; and

my eye is intensely gratified. But remaining ignorant of the subject, I go away, and the whole shortly vanishes from my memory. I see it again; and now I notice the inscription at the bottom, *Date obolum Belisario*—"Give your charity to Belisarius." I then recollect an interesting passage of history. A crowd of moral images throng upon my spirit; I soften to tenderness; and I comprehend the affecting lesson, which the artist is giving me. I review the painting, again and again; and thrill at the view of the blind warrior, and of the child holding out his helmet to receive alms.

When we travel, those points of view in the landscape which long fix our eye, are those which awaken ideas of innocence and peace, or those which affect the heart with associations connected with the morning of our life; or ideas of that power and immensity, which move and elevate the soul. The paintings of nature, as well as those of men, are thus capable of being embellished by moral associations. In travelling, I perceive a delightful isle embosomed in a peaceful lake. While I contemplate it, with the simple pleasure excited by a charming landscape, I am told that it is inhabited by a happy pair, who were long afflicted and separated; but who are now living there with much of the innocence and peace of the first tenants of paradise. How different an interest the landscape

now assumes ! I behold the happy pair, without care or regret, sheltered from jealous observation, enjoying each other's society, gratefully contemplating the Author of the beautiful scenery around them ; and elevating their love and their hearts in praise to HIM.

Spots, which in themselves, have no peculiar charm, become most beautiful as soon as they awaken touching remembrances. Suppose yourself cast by misfortune on the care of a stranger in a strange land. He attempts to dispel your dejection, and says, "These countries are hospitable, and nature here puts forth all her opulence ; come and enjoy it with us." The gay landscapes, which spread before you, all assume the appearance of strangers ; and offer but little attraction. But while your eye traverses the scenery with indifference, you see blue hills melting into the distant horizon. No person remarks them, but yourself. They resemble the mountains of your own country, the scenes upon which your infant view first rested. You turn away to conceal the new emotions, and your eyes are filling with tears. You continue to gaze fondly on those hills, dear to memory. In the midst of a rich landscape, they are all that interests you. You return to review them every day, and demand of them their treasured remembrances and illusions,—the dearest pleasures of your exile.

All the senses would offer me examples, in illustration of this idea. Deprive the pleasures of physical love of moral associations, which touch the heart, and you take from it all that elevates the enjoyment above that of the lowest animals. Else, why do modesty, innocence, the expression of unstained chastity, and the graces of simplicity possess such enchanting attractions? The truth, that there exists in love a charm stronger than physical impulse, is not unknown even to women of abandoned manners. The most dangerous of all those in this unhappy class, are they, who, not relying on their beauty, feign still to possess, or deeply to regret those virtues, which they have really cast away.

The last delights which imagination can add to the pleasures of love, are not to be sought in those vile places where libertinism is an art. We must imagine the early attachments of virtuous youth, whose spirits are blended in real affection, in similar tastes, pursuits and hopes; who realize those vague images which they had scarcely allowed before to float across the mind.

They who seek in the pleasures of taste only physical sensations, degrade their minds and finish their useless existence in infirmity and brutal degradation. The pleasures of taste should only serve to render other enjoyments more vivid, the imagination more brilliant, and the pursuits of life more easy and pleasant.

The pleasures derived from odours are only vivid, when they impart to the mind a fleeting and vague exaltation. If the Orientals indulge a passion for respiring perfumes, it is not solely to procure pleasurable physical sensation. An embalmed atmosphere exalts the senses, and disposes the mind to pleasant reverie, and paints dreams of paradise upon the indolent imagination.

Were I disposed to present the details of a system upon this subject, the sense of hearing would offer me a crowd of examples. The brilliant and varied accents of the nightingale are ravishing. But what a difference between hearing the melody from a cage, and listening to the song at the noon of night, when a cool and pure air refreshes the lassitude of the burning day, and we behold objects by the light of the moon, and hear the strains of the solitary bird poured from her free bower !

A symphony, the sounds of which only delight the ear, would soon become wearying. If it have no other determinate expression, it ought, at least, to inspire reverie, and produce an effect not unlike that of perfumes upon the Orientals.

Suppose we have been at a musical entertainment, got up with all the luxury of art. Emotions of delight and astonishment rapidly succeed each other, and we believe it impossible to experience superior sensations of pleasure. In returning home,

we chance to hear in the distance, through the stillness of night, a well remembered song of our infancy, that was sung to us by some one dear to our memory. It is at once a music exciting more profound emotion, than all the strains of art which we so recently thought could not be surpassed. The remembrances of infancy and home rush upon the spirit, and efface the pompous spectacle, and the artificial graces of execution.

Observations to the same effect might be multiplied without end. If you desire pleasures, fertile in happy remembrances, if you wish to preserve elevation of mind and freshness of imagination, choose, among the pleasures of the senses, only those which associate with moral ideas. Feeble, when separated from the alliance of those ideas, they become fatal when they exclude them. To dare to taste them, is to sacrifice happiness to pleasures which are alike ephemeral and degrading. It is to resemble him, who should strip the tree of its flowers, to enjoy their beauty. He loses the fruits which would have followed, and scarcely casts his eye on the flowers before they have faded.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE PLEASURES OF THE HEART.

THE Creator has put forth in his gifts, a magnificence which should impress our hearts. What variety in those affectionate sentiments, of the delights of which our natures are susceptible! Without going out of the family circle, I enumerate filial piety, fraternal affection, friendship, love, and parental tenderness. These different sentiments can all co-exist in our hearts, and so far from weakening, each tends to give vigour and intensity to the other. No doubt, the need of so many affections and props attest our feebleness and dependence. But I can scarcely conceive of the happiness which a being, insensible to weakness and want, could find in himself. I am ready to bless that infirmity of our natures, which is the source of so many pleasures, and such tender affections.

Let us avoid confounding that sensibility which exacts the pleasures of the heart, with that which produces impassioned characters. They differ as essentially as the genuine, vital warmth, from the burning of a fever. Indolence, objects calculated strongly to strike the imagination, and those maxims which corrupt the understanding, develop a vague and ardent sensibility, which sometimes conducts to crime, and always to misery. The other species is approved by reason and preserved by virtue. We owe to it those pure emotions which impart upon earth an indistinct sentiment of the joys of heaven.

There are men, however, who dread genuine sensibility; and, under the conviction that it will multiply their pains, study to eradicate the germs of it from their soul. Hume remarked to a friend, who confided to him his secret sorrows, "You entertain an internal enemy, who will always hinder you from being happy. It is your sensibility of heart," "What!" responded his friend with a kind of terror, "Have you not sensibility?" "No. My reason alone speaks, and it declares that it is right to soothe distress."

In listening to this reply of Hume, we are at once struck with the idea, that the greater part of those who adopt his principles, do not pause at the same point with their model. They sink into

that heartless class, who see all human calamities with a dry eye, provided they have no tendency to abridge their own enjoyments.

Suppose even that they pursue the lessons of the Scotch philosopher to better purpose; and without any emotion, without any impulse of heart, hold out a succouring hand to those who suffer. This, perhaps, may answer the claims of reason. But the social instinct will always repel that austere morality, which would give to the human heart an unnatural insensibility, and deprive it, if I may so say, of its amiable weakness. I would hardly desire to see a man oppose a courage, too stoical to his own miseries. The natural tears which he sheds in extreme affliction, are his guarantee for the sympathy which he will feel for my sorrows. I say to the heartless philosophers of the world, that if the only requisite for happiness is to avoid suffering, through destitution of feeling, to die is the surest method of all.

The secret of happiness does not consist in avoiding all evils; for in that case, we must learn to love nothing. If there be a lot on earth worthy of envy, it is that of a man, good and tender hearted, who beholds his own creation in the happiness of all who surround him. Let him who would be happy, strive to encircle himself with happy beings. Let the happiness of his family

be the incessant object of his thoughts. Let him divine the sorrows and anticipate the wishes of his friends. Let him inspire the fidelity of affection in his domestics, by pledging to them a comfortable and pleasant old age. Let him, as far as may be, preserve the same servants, and give them all needed succour and counsel. In fine, let the inmates and dependents of the house all respire a calm and regulated happiness. Let even the domestic animals know, that humanity presides over their condition.

Entertaining such views, it will be easy to see in what light I contemplate those men who take pleasure in witnessing the combats of animals. What man, who has a heart, can see spectacles, equally barbarous and detestable, with satisfaction; such as dogs tearing to pieces a bull exhausted with wounds; cocks mangling each other; the encounter of brutal boxers, or of bad boys in the streets encouraged to the diabolical sport of fighting? These are the true schools of cowardly and savage ferocity, and not of manly courage, as too many have supposed. But it is not my purpose to draw a painting in detail of the abominations of cruelty, or of the pleasures of beneficence.

To preserve the sentiments of beneficence and sensibility, let us avoid the pride which mars them. Beneficence in one respect resembles love. Like that, it courts concealment and the shade.

The most useful direction we can give to beneficence is, to multiply its gifts as widely as possible. Let us avoid imitating those men who are always fearful of being deceived by those who solicit their pity. In an uncertainty whether or not you ought to extend succour, grant it. It can only expose you to the error that is least subject to repentance.

Offer useful counsels and indulgent consolations. Save, from despair, the unfortunate victim, who groans under the remorse of an unpremeditated fault. Unite him again to society by those cords which his imprudence has broken. Rekindle in him the love of his kind, by saying to him, "Though you may not recover innocence, repentance can at least restore your virtue."

If we have access to the opulent and powerful, we have an honourable but a difficult task to fulfil. To assume the often thankless office of soliciting frequent favours for friends, without losing the consideration necessary to success, requires peculiar tact, discernment and dignity. Above all, it requires disinterested zeal. In attempting this delicate duty in the form of letters, we may soon dissipate our slender fund of credit. Letters of recommendation resemble a paper currency. They are redeemed in specie so long as they are issued discreetly, and in small amounts, but which become worse than blank paper, as soon as we multiply them too far.

Such is the intrinsic attraction of beneficence, that even if we refuse to practise it, we still love whatever retraces its image. A romance affects us. Touching events soften our hearts. In thus embracing the shadow, we pay a sublime testimonial to the substance.

The example of beneficence so readily finds its way to every heart, that we are affected even in thinking of those who practise it. The coldest hearts pay a tribute of veneration to those women, who, in consecrating themselves to the service of the poor and the sick, encounter extreme fatigue, disgust, and often abuse from the wretched objects themselves, in the squalidness and filth of prisons and hospitals. How beautiful to learn to put forth patience to mitigate the maladies of the body, and hope, to soothe those of the mind! Ye who practise virtues thus touching and sublime, from motives of love to the great Author of all good, may well hope for the approbation of heaven. Ye seem to have passed in light across our dark sphere, only to fulfil a transient and celestial mission, to return again to the celestial country.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE PLEASURES OF THE UNDERSTANDING.

IN the savage the intellectual faculties sleep. As soon as his appetites are satisfied, he sees neither pleasures to desire, nor pains to fear. He lies down and sleeps again. This negative happiness would bring desolation to the heart of a civilized man. All his faculties have commenced their development. He experiences a new craving, which occupations, grave or futile, but rapidly changed and renewed, can alone appease. If there occur between them intervals which can be filled neither by remembrances, nor by necessary repose, lassitude intervenes, and measures for him the length of these chasms in life by sadness.

The next enemy to happiness, after vice, is ennui. Some escape it without much seeming calculation. My neighbour every morning turns over

twenty gazettes, the state articles of which are copied, the one from the other. Economizing the pleasure of this reading, and gravely reposing in the intervals, he communicates, sometimes with an oracular tone, sometimes with a modest reserve, his reflections to those who surround him; and, at length leaves the reading-room with the importance of one who feels that he has discharged a debt to society.

In public places, it is not the spectacles, but the emotions of the common people who behold them, that are worthy of contemplation. In the murder of a poor tragedy by wretched actors, what transports from this enthusiastic mass of the audience, when a blow of the poniard, preceded by a pompous maxim, lays the tyrant of the piece low! What earnest feeling! what sincere tears do we witness! How much more worthy of envy these honest people, who lose their enjoyment neither by the revolting improbability of the situations, nor by the absurdity of the dialogue, nor by the mousing of the rehearsal, than those fastidious critics who exalt their intellectual pride at the expense of these cheap enjoyments!

From the moment in which a man feels sincere pleasure in cultivating his understanding, he may date defiance to the fear of the weight of time. He has the magic key which unlocks the exhaust-

less treasury of enjoyments. He lives in the age and country which he prefers. Space and time are no longer obstacles to his happiness. He interrogates the wise and good of all ages and all countries ; and his conversations with them cease, or change their object, as soon as he chooses. How much gratitude does he owe the author of nature, for having impressed on genius so many different impulses ! With Plato, he is among the sages of Greece, hearing their lessons, and associating his wishes with theirs for the happiness of his kind. In the range of history, he ascends to the infancy of empires and time.

If a man has powers and acquirements, it is a great evil, if he is disposed to fatigue others with his self-love. If we could number all the subjects of which the most accomplished scholar is ignorant, we should perceive that the interval between him and a common person is not so immense as he may imagine. Ought he to be astonished if the real friends of the Muses tire of his declamations, his recitations, and occupancy with himself ?

To attain truth should be the real end of all study. In such researches, the mind kindles, as by enchantment, at every step ! The desire to succeed produces that noble emotion which is always developed by ardent zeal and pure intentions. Success, although we were to think nothing of its

results, inspires a kind of pleasure ; because truth comports with our understanding, as brilliant and soft colours agree with the eye, or pleasant sounds with the ear. This enjoyment naturally associates with another still more vivid. The effect of truth is universally salutary ; and every instance in which our feeble intellect discovers some gleams, elevates the spirit, and penetrates it with a high degree of happiness.

One of the chief advantages of study is, that it enfranchises the mind from those prejudices that disturb life. How many, and what agonizing torments have been caused by those which are associated with false ideas of religion. After those great calamities in the dark ages which destroyed the traces of the sciences and arts, men, pursued by terror, seemed to imagine that they constantly saw malevolent spirits flying among the clouds, or wandering in the depth of woods. The sound of strong wind and thunder came to their ear as the voice of infernal divinities ; and, prostrate with terror, they sought to appease their angry gods by bloody sacrifices. In process of time, a small number of men, enlightened by observation, dared to raise the veil by degrees, and succeeded in dissipating these terrors, by tracing the seeming prodigies to some of the simplest laws of physics. The phantoms of superstition vanished, and, in the

light of reason, revealed a just and beneficent Divinity presiding over obedient nature.

We think, in our pride, that an immense interval separates us from those times of disaster, ignorance and alarm. How many of our kind, unhappy by their intellectual weakness, still tremble before the jealous and implacable god of their imaginations. The man who is exempt from prejudices is alone capable of prostrating himself before the Divinity from a feeling of love, and whose prayer, alike confident and resigned, is addressed to his noble attributes of power, justice, and clemency. Every rational mind must finally settle to repose in that glorious persuasion, which instantly irradiates the moral universe with perennial sunshine. "The Lord reigneth ; let the earth rejoice." In this or any other world, in our present or any other forms of conscious being, we may advance upon the unexplored scenes with a full confidence that we can never travel beyond the beneficence and mercy of the infinite mind.

There are other errors which study dispels. The student who is charmed by converse with the muses, does not consume his best years in gloomy intrigues ; nor do you meet him pressing forward in the path which ambition has traced. The Greeks, fertile in significant allegories, supposed the same divinity to preside over the sciences and wisdom.

The habit of living in converse with the noblest works of mind and art, produces elevation of soul; and he who has an elevated mind is likely to be good and happy. Exempt, in some happy measure, from the weaknesses of vanity, and free from the tumultuous passions, he cultivates the noble and generous virtues for the pleasure of practising them. Disdaining a mass of objects of desire which disturb the vulgar, he offers a small mark to misery. Should adversity strike him, he has resources so much the more sure, as he finds them in himself.

No one can ever taste the full charm of letters and the arts, except in the bosom of retirement. If he reads and meditates only for the pursuit of fame, amusements change to labours. If we propose to enter the lists, outstrip rivals, and direct a party, we are soon agitated with little passions, but great inquietudes. Heaven, sternly decreeing, that no earthly felicity shall be unalloyed, has placed a thirst for celebrity as a drawback upon the love of study.

But ought the ardour to render permanent services to our fellow-creatures, to be suppressed? Are not these the source of pleasures as pure as they are ravishing? I contemplate an immense and indestructible republic, composed of all those men who devote themselves to the happiness of

their kind. Occupied without relaxation or abatement in continuing the works which their predecessors have begun, they bequeath to their successors the care of pursuing and crowning their labours. Men of genius are the chiefs of this republic. As they have talents which separate them from the rest of the human race, they have also pleasures reserved for themselves alone. What a sublime sentiment must have elevated the spirit of Newton, when a part of the mysterious laws of the universe first dawned on his mind! A glow still more delightful must have pervaded the bosom of Fenelon, when meditating the most beautiful lessons which wisdom ever announced to the powerful, and the rulers of the people. To these privileged beings it belongs, to give a noble impulse to minds, and to trace a new path for the generation to come.

I shall have attained my humble ambition if I shall be able, in any degree, to indicate the way in which these lessons may be carried out into life. I shall thus have contributed my aid to dissipate the night of prejudice and vice.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE PLEASURES OF THE IMAGINATION.

ALL our pleasures are fugitive, but they are all, in some measure, real. That wonderful faculty, the imagination, awakens past enjoyments, charms the instant that is transpiring, and either veils the future, or embellishes it in the radiance of hope.

Let us banish that vulgar prejudice which represents reason and imagination as two enemies which cannot exist together. The severest reason ought not to disdain any pure gratification. The happy paintings even of a dream bring joy, until their rainbow hues melt away. The dreams of the imagination have greatly the advantage over those of sleep. Our will gives them birth. We prolong, dissipate, and renew them at pleasure. All, who have learned to multiply these happy moments,

know, at the same time, how to enjoy these agreeable visions, and paint with enchantment those dreamy hours which they owe to the effervescence of a gay imagination.

There are situations in which reason has no better counsel to give us than to yield ourselves up to those illusions which mingle pleasures with our sufferings. I knew a worthy, but unfortunate man, who passed twenty months in prison. He informed me, that he not unfrequently dreamed that his wife and children visited him and restored him to liberty. This dream left a remembrance so profound, an emotion so delightful, that he determined to attempt to renew it by day. When evening came, exciting his imagination to its most vigorous action, he endeavoured to persuade himself that the moment of the re-union was come. He represented to himself the transports of his wife and the caresses of his children; and he allowed no thought but these delightful visions to occupy his mind until the moment when sleep once more wrapped him in forgetfulness. The habit of concentrating his imagination for this result, he assured me, finally rendered these illusions incredibly vivid and real. He expected night with impatience; and the certainty that the close of day would bring some happy moments, threw over the tedious hours an emotion which mitigated his sufferings.

These charming illusions, in misfortune, resemble those brilliant northern lights, which, in the midst of a night that lasts for weeks, present the image of dawn during the dreary winters of the polar circle. An excitable and vivid faculty, which deceives misfortune, ought to embellish happiness. To the pleasant things we possess, it adds those we desire. By its magic, we renew the hours of which the memory is dear. We taste the pleasures which a distant future promises ; and see, at least, the fleeting shadow of those which are passing away.

A gloomy philosopher has told us, that such illusions are the effect of a transient insanity. It seems to me, on the contrary, that insane thoughts are those which create ennui ; and that rational ideas are those which throw innocent charms over life. Why should the morose being, who perceives only bad people on the earth, and only miseries in the future, blame him who cradles flattering hopes of enjoyment, always springing up anew, for allowing himself to be beguiled by the illusions of his imagination ? Both deceive themselves. But the one cherishes a mistake which brings hatred and suffering, and the other lives on gaily in his illusions.

Wisdom does not disdain a faculty merely for being brilliant ; and, to taste all the pleasures of

imagination, it is indispensable that reason should be much exercised.

Imagination resembles the magician of an oriental romance who transports his favourite hero to scenes of enchantment, to try him with pleasures; and then delivers him over to a hostile magician, who multiplies peril and misery around him. This creative faculty, in its perversion, is as fertile to invent torments as, in its more propitious moods, to bring forth pleasures. If once we resign ourselves to its gloomy caprices, it conjures up the terror of a thousand unreal evils. Reason cannot always follow its meteor path; but ought, at least to point out the course in which happiness invites it to walk.

The aid of reason is still more necessary at the moment when the chimeras of imagination disappear. It is an afflicting moment. Reason should prepare us to meet it. Every man, with an elevated mind and a kind heart, has delighted to imagine himself far away from the ignorant and wicked; in a smiling country, separated from the rest of the world, and alone with a few friends. Suppose this dream realized; I am aware that to-morrow, the peaceful exile might be indulging regrets for the place he had left; and forming plans to escape from the ennui of the new country. Since we change our destiny in these respects,

without altering our instinctive desire of change, let us study the art of softening the pains of our actual condition; and let us learn to extract all possible advantages from it by imparting to it, if nothing more, the embellishment created by the happy anticipations of a fertile imagination.

Ought we to indulge regrets because these paintings of the imagination so rapidly disappear? I have seen the rich and the great stripped, in a moment, of their fortune and power; and shall I afflict myself because my dream has vanished? These unfortunate people lost all that was dear to them, for ever. For me, I can renew these pleasures of imagination at my will.

A thousand external circumstances, which it would require a volume to enumerate, must concur with a strong excitability in the physical and mental frame, to impart happy and vigorous action to the imagination. Milton affirmed, that his muse was most propitious in the spring. As far as I can judge, the season of reproduction, and the awakening of the slumbering powers of nature, in the aroma and brilliancy of vegetation and flowers, acts too voluptuously on the senses, to give the highest and best direction to the imagination. The Indian summer days of autumn, with the associated repose of nature, the broad and crimson disk of the sun enthroned in the dome of a misty sky, the clouds

sleeping in the firmament, the gorgeous colouring of the forests, the flashing fall of the first leaves, and the not unpleasing sadness of the images, called up by the imperceptible decay of nature, and the stealthy approach of winter, seem to me most favourable to heavenly musing. A cloudless morning, a beautiful sun, the glittering brightness of the dew drops, the renovated freshness of nature, morning sounds, the mists rolling away from the path of the sun, a bland south-west breeze, good health, self-satisfaction, the recent reception of good news, and the right train of circumstances, all concur to put this faculty into its happiest action.

Far from sacrificing any of our faculties, let us exercise them all; and let them mutually conduce to our happiness. As we advance in life, our reason should grow to the calm of mature age. But let the imagination and the heart still preserve scintillations of the fire of youth.

CHAPTER XX.

MELANCHOLY.

THERE is no pleasure of earth but, as soon as it becomes vivid, has a tendency to tinge itself with melancholy. The birth of an infant, the convalescence of a father, the return of a friend who has been long absent, fill the eyes with tears. Nature has thus chosen to mingle the colours of joy and sadness. Having destined us to experience each of the emotions in turn, she has ordained that the shades of transition should melt into each other.

The dearest remembrances are those which are accompanied by tenderness of heart. The sports of infancy, the first loves, the perils we have for ever escaped, and the faults we have learned to repair, are of the number. Whoever will recollect

the happiest moments of his life, will find them to have produced this emotion.

Modern imagination has painted melancholy as a tall and unearthly spectre, enveloped in a winding sheet. There is, however, a pensiveness, akin to her, the real traits of whose countenance are those of innocence, occupied in pleasant reverie: and whilst tears are in her eyes, a smile dwells on her lips.

It is the resort of a sterile imagination, and a cold heart, to invest even the tomb with borrowed ideas of darkness; to wait for night in which to visit it; and to torment the fancy to people it with dreadful phantoms. Real sensibility would not require such an effort to be awakened. It fills my mind with a pleasing sadness to wander in the burial-ground, under the soft radiance of the moon, among monuments of white marble, and hear the night-breeze sigh among the weeping willows. I am deeply affected with, here and there, a touching inscription. I remember one in which a father says, that he has had five children, and that here sleeps the last of them. In another, a father and mother announce that their daughter died at seventeen, a victim of their weak indulgence, and of the extravagant modes of the time. This sojourn of repose, with the words written in these

abodes of silence, inspire tenderness for those who are no more, as well as for those whose treasured affection still recollects them; penetrating the soul with emotions not without their charms. In the view of tombs, we immediately direct our thoughts to an internal survey of ourselves. I mark out my place among the peaceful mansions. I imagine the vernal grass and flowers reviving over my place of rest. My imagination transports me to the days which I shall not see, and sounds for me the soothing dirge of the adieus of friendship pronounced over the spot where I am laid.

A throng of remembrances and anticipations, naturally crowd upon the spirit of a person in such a place. Youth with its rainbows, and its loves; mature age with its ambitious projects; old age in the midst of children, death in the natal spot, or the house of the stranger; eternity with its dim and illimitable mysteriousness; these shadowy images, with their associated thoughts, pass through the mind, and return like the guests at an inn. While I look up towards the rolling clouds, and the sun walking his unvarying path along the firmament, how natural the reflection, that they will present the same aspect, and suggest the same reflections, that the trees will stand forth in their foliage, and the hills in their verdure, to him who

comes after me, when I shall have taken my place with the unconscious sleepers about me ! I never fail, on such occasions, to recollect the charming reflections in a number of the Spectator, that treats upon a visit to Westminster Abbey, the most impressive writing of the kind, as it seems to me, in our language.

I generally carry from my sojourn in these our last mansions, one painful sentiment. I remark that many tombs are raised by parents for their children ; by husbands for their wives ; by widows for their husbands. I observe that there are but few erected by children for their fathers. Perhaps it is right that love should ascend in that scale, rather than descend in the other.

Occasional visits to ruins and tombs inspire a salutary pensiveness. But the habit of frequently contemplating these melancholy objects is dangerous. It blunts sensibility and creates the necessity of always requiring strong emotions. It nourishes in the soul sombre ideas which do not associate with happiness. Without doubt, there are those who are so unhappy as to long for the repose of the grave ; who find solace in these gloomy spectacles. Young, after having lost his only daughter, after having in vain solicited a little consecrated earth to cover the remains of the youthful

victim; after being reduced to the necessity of interring the loved one with his own hands, might be tempted to fly his kind and love only night, solitude, and tombs. There have been men, condemned by the award of nature, to such reverses as nourish an incurable and perpetual melancholy. Their frigid imitators, without their reason and profound feeling, in wishing to render themselves singular, become tiresome and ridiculous in their melancholy.

Writers of the most splendid genius of the age, have consecrated their talents to celebrate melancholy; not that melancholy which has a smile of profound sensibility, but that which has been cradled in tombs, and which holds out to us the full draught of sadness. There is something in these heart-rending scenes, these mournful spectacles, which the age seeks with avidity. A writer, whose talent tends to render his errors seducing, has taken pleasure in viewing the Christian religion as opening an inexhaustible source of agreeable pensiveness. My opinion in regard to the legitimate tendency of true piety is, that it must produce tranquillity, confidence, and joy. It is a departure from true religion, which is followed by a vague sadness, gloom, and despondency.

Were it true, that the Christian religion inspired an insatiate craving for gloomy reveries, far from

considering it as I do, divine, I should estimate it as anti-social. The true friends of the Christian religion always paint it as it is, more powerful than even human misery ; giving clothing to the naked, bread to the hungry, an asylum to the sick, a peaceful home to the returning prodigal, and a mother to the orphan ; wiping away the tears of innocence with a celestial hand, and filling the eyes of the culpable and contrite with tears of consolation. Let pious thankfulness and a calm courage, which even death cannot shake, environ its modest heroes. Let its martyrs be those of charity and toleration. Such was the spirit of Erasmus ; such, of the divine Fenelon ; such of William Penn, and a few tolerant lights that have gleamed through ages of persecution and darkness. Such are the men whose disciples we desire to multiply. Let us cease to incorporate melancholy errors, and gloomy follies, with the religion of peace, confidence, and hope ; eloquence was imparted for a nobler use.

Religion is the key-stone of the arch of the moral universe. It is the fountain of endearing friendship ; and on it are founded those sublime relations which exist between the visible and the invisible world ; those who still sojourn here and those who have become citizens of the country beyond us. It is the poesy of existence, the basis of all high thought and virtuous feeling ; of chari-

ties and morals ; and the very tie of social existence. Let no person claim to be virtuous, while laying an unhallowed hand upon this ark of the covenant of the Eternal with the children of sorrow and death.

CHAPTER XXI.

RELIGIOUS SENTIMENTS.

THE philosophy of happiness must find its ultimate requisite in the hopes of religion. Man must be persuaded that his present life has relation to a never-ending futurity, and that a gracious Providence watches over the universe, before he will abandon himself with a tranquil confidence to those irresistible laws by which he is borne along. He then marches towards the future, as he would confidently follow a guide of tried prudence and fidelity in a dark path.

In the fever and tumult of worldly pleasures and pursuits, the voice of wisdom has little chance to be heard, and it seems necessary that trouble should force the mind in upon itself, before we become inclined to seek our consolation in religion. Then we invoke this sublime and consoling power, and

like the friend that avoids our prosperity and our festivals, but returns to cheer our misfortunes, this celestial friend is at hand to offer her sustaining succour. We may class all those pleasures as unworthy of the name, which will not harmonize with this august visitant. Even in our periods of happiness, if we pause for the reflection of a moment, we find the need of immortality to support and comfort us in this vale of tears, and to satisfy our infinite desires. All the generous and tender affections acquire a new charm in alliance with religious ideas, in the same manner as objects, beautiful in themselves, receive a new lustre when a pure light is thrown upon them. Filial piety becomes more touching in those children who pray with fervour for the preservation of the life of a mother. Let a pious courage guide the sister of charity, and she becomes the angel of consolation, as she visits the abodes of misery. Even virtue itself does not receive its celestial impress, except in alliance with religious sentiments. A few of the higher philosophers among the noble ancients, and Fenelon, Newton, Milton, and a few other men of immortal name, saw the Divinity as he is, and contemplated the perfect model of his infinite perfections. Their efforts tended to co-operate with the divine views of order and harmony, in constantly directing human actions and thoughts to-

wards the supreme good. The beautiful system of the Gospel has the same simplicity of object; and its tendency to honour and meliorate humanity is directed by the highest wisdom. Its noble sentiments give to all our faculties a beneficent direction, and fertilize genius, as well as invigorate our virtue. High models, in any walk of mind, will never be produced in a world whose inhabitants believe in nothing but matter, fortuitous combinations, and the annihilation of our being. Apostles of atheism! your dreary creed throws an impenetrable gloom upon the universe, and dries the source of all elevated thought. The advocates of these views vaunt the necessity of proclaiming the truth; but the very best of them inculcate only a very small part of it: I, too, am the fearless advocate of the truth, and have no dread of its results. But could I be persuaded, that religious hopes were unfounded, I should be tempted to renounce my confidence in truth itself; and no longer to inculcate the necessity of loving and seeking to propagate it. It is by the light of this divine torch that real sages have desired to investigate religion. Were it possible that the elevated and consoling ideas, which religion offers, could be baseless and absurd chimeras, error and truth would be so confounded, that there would no longer remain any discriminating sign, by which to

distinguish the one from the other. Infidels boast that they are the only frank and hardy antagonists of superstition. They are its most effectual allies. The superstitious have brought forth the unbelievers, and these have reproduced the superstitious ; as, in revolutions, resistance produces fury, and that multiplies resistance.

I have known some interesting persons, apparently earnest and docile enquirers for truth, who have desired in vain to establish in their mind these consolatory convictions. Their understanding did not immediately respond to the wishes of their hearts.

Why can I not impart this happy conviction to their understanding ? My arguments are very simple ; but I think with Bacon, that it needs quite as much credulity to adopt the opinion of infidels, as to yield faith to all the reveries of the Talmud or the Koran. The more profoundly I attempt to investigate the doctrines of infidelity, and consider every thing that surrounds me, as resulting from the combinations of chance, the play of atoms, the efforts of dead matter, the more my enquiries are involved in darkness. I strive in vain to give to any hypothesis of unbelief the honest semblance of probability. Matter cannot reflect upon the order which its different parts

require. Neither can those parts interchange reason and discussion. Neither an atom, nor a globe can say to others of their class, "Such are the courses in which we must move." Let us simplify difficulties as much as possible, and admit that matter has always existed; let us even suppose motion essential to it; a supreme intelligence is none the less necessary to the harmony of the universe. Without a governor of worlds, I can only conceive of nihilism or chaos.

From this sublime thought, that there is a good, a holy, and yet a gracious God, flows all the truths which my heart desires. The beautiful superstructure of Christianity results, as a corollary, or ultimate inference, from this consolatory axiom. The system which rejects the soul's immortality, is equally absurd with that of atheism. Of the different arguments against the being of a God, the most striking one is that which is drawn from the evils which prevail on the earth. The first thought of every man of sensibility is, that, had he the power to make a world, he would banish misery from it, and so arrange the order of things, as that existence should be, to all conscious beings, a succession of moments each marked by happiness. But infirmities, vices, misery, sorrow, and death, pursue us. How can we reconcile the

misery of the creation with the power and beneficence of the Creator? How resolve this strange problem? How explain this revolting contradiction? Immortality is the only solution of the enigma of life.

A whimsical combination of deism and materialism forms, at present, the most widely diffused system among unbelievers. They have imagined a God possessing only physical power, and contemplating the movement of his innumerable worlds, alike indifferent to crime and virtue. He beholds with the same carelessness the generations that pass, and those that succeed; and sees deliverers and tyrants alike confounded in their fall. Admit the truth of such dogmas, and the conceptions of a religious man would possess more expansion and sublimity than the views of the Eternal. Socrates, without the illumination of the gospel, could have taught them better. Surrounded by his weeping disciples, he points them beyond the tomb to the places where the sage at last respires freely; and where the misfortunes and inequalities of earth are redressed. In painting these illusions of hope, if they are vain, the sage has conceived in his dreams an equity superior to that of the Infinite Being. Let us dare to maintain that the feeble children of clay have a right to entertain ideas of

order and desert, more just than those of the Creator, or admit that the spirit of man, made capable of another and a nobler life, is destined to enjoy it.

The destiny of all the inferior orders that surround us, appears to terminate upon the earth. Ours alone is evidently not accomplished here. The animals, exempt from vice, incapable of virtue, experience, in ceasing to live, neither hopes nor regrets. They die without the foresight of death. Man, in the course of an agitated life, degrades himself by follies and vices, or honours himself by generous and useful actions. Remembrances, loves, ties, in countless forms, twine about his heart. He is torn, in agony, from beings for whom he has commenced an affection that he feels might be eternal. Persecuted for his virtue, proscribed for his wisdom and courage, calumniated for his most conscientious acts, he turns to heaven a fixed look of confidence and hope. Has he nothing to perform beyond death? Has the author of nature forgotten his justice, only in completing his most perfect work?

Our immortality is a necessary consequence of the existence of God. Let us not wander astray in vain discussions, which, with our present faculties, we can never master, such as relate to the

nature of the soul. My hopes, my convictions, rest not upon a cloudy, metaphysical argument. Neither can the proud treatise of a sophist weaken, nor the puerile dialectics of a pedant increase it. It is enough for me that there is a God. Virtue in misfortune must have hopes which do not terminate with the tomb.

Is man free? We can reduce this question which has been so much agitated, and so often obscured, to terms of entire simplicity. It has been most forcibly presented by Hobbes, the vile apostle at once of atheism and despotism, who seems to have striven to unite the most pernicious doctrines with an example, which merits execration. "Two objects," he remarks, "attract us in opposite directions. As long as they produce impressions nearly equal, our mind, in a state of uncertainty, vacillates from the one to the other; and we believe that we are deliberating. Finally, one of the objects strikes us with a stronger impression than the other. We are drawn towards it; and we believe that it is because we will it. Thus man, always passive, yields to the strongest and most vivid sensation. Free actions would be an effect without a cause." Admirable reasoning! What other freedom could I wish, than to prefer what seems to me most desirable? Let the disci-

ples of Hobbes instruct me how they would choose that man should determine, in order to be conscious of liberty? Would they wish him to choose the object that is repugnant to him? This is too evidently absurd. Should he vacillate in indifference between the one object and the other? This would be to sink into an existence of perfect apathy, without reason or will. Man has all the liberty of which such a being is capable, all, in fact, which he could desire.

How puerile are these metaphysical subtleties, when employed upon moral truths! What a monster would man become on the system of the fatalist! What is that system worth, the consequences of which cannot be admitted? If we act under the inevitable empire of fatalism, why is he who proclaims this doctrine, indignant at the thought of crime? Does he contemplate Socrates and his executioners with the same approbation? Will he regard with the same feeling Antoninus dictating pious lessons to his son, and Nero assassinating his mother? Will he estimate as alike meritorious a persecuted Christian praying for his enemies, and the monarch ordering the massacre of St. Bartholomew? Do such contrasts offend us? And why? According to the system of fatalism, the good ought to inspire us with less interest than

the wicked. A blind fatality awards to the virtuous that pure pleasure that is inseparably connected with good actions. They receive a high reward without any merit; while the others are a prey to remorse, and the incessant object of public hatred and abhorrence. If they are innocent, as on the principles of fatalism they must be, how ought we to mourn over them, and pity them! What purpose can these doctrines serve? He who advocates them, is conscious of impulses to do good, and deliberates upon alternatives in the courses which honour and duty call him to pursue. His principles, then, are contradicted by the voice of his own heart. When he has committed a fault, it declares to him that he might have chosen a contrary part. When he has done a virtuous action, it inspires emotions of joy, which render him conscious that he is a free agent. This voice within is anterior to all reasoning, and as incapable of being invalidated as any other consciousness. Inexhaustible emotions of satisfaction spring from religious hopes. Reanimated by them, I no longer see tears without consolation, nor fear an eternal adieu to those I love. The tomb, though a fearful, is but a frail barrier, which separates us from those real joys, of which the pleasures of a fugitive existence are but the shadow.

One prejudice which has greatly injured religion is intolerance, or that spirit which causes us to view all persons guilty, whose faith is different from ours. While religion enjoins it upon us to cover the faults of our kind with a veil of indulgence, intolerance teaches us to transform their opinions into crimes. Religion rears asylums for the unfortunate. Intolerance prepares scaffolds for all whom she chooses to denominate heretics. The one invokes ministers of charity, and the other executioners. The one wipes away tears, and the other sheds the blood of its victims.

Intolerance without power is simply ridiculous ; but becomes most odious when armed with authority. The cry of humanity and of religion is, "Glory to God in the highest, on earth peace ; good-will to men !" If any were excepted, it should be the intolerant. Even they merit no severer punishment than the inflictions of their own fury. They may attain to deliverance from remorse in their confident delirium, and may count their crimes as virtues, through the influence of self-blindness. But this strange obliquity of the understanding, this horrible intoxication, repels happiness. Joy and peace must fly the soul of which this spirit has taken possession.

Open the gospels and the epistles, and what is

the first impression from perusing these unique and original writings, so wholly unlike any other recorded compositions, and bearing upon a theme of such astonishing import? The simplicity and fervour with which the spirit of love is impressed upon the pages; the strong, and before unwitnessed, manifestation of this spirit, was the striking aspect which the first Christians presented to pagan beholders; "See!" said they, "how these Christians love one another." Every time I peruse the writings of the New Testament, this peculiar badge of discipleship seems more visibly impressed upon them. In what other chronicles do we meet with such affecting and sublime examples of devotion to each other, and such a constancy of affection as showed itself proof against all other human passions, selfishness, hope, fear, earthly love, and the terror of death? What tenderness and singleness of heart in their affection for each other, do we see in the primitive Christians! How beautifully they demonstrate that the sentiment which actuated them, had gained a complete triumph over all considerations, arising from objects below the sun! He, on whose bosom the loved disciple leaned, must certainly be admitted to know the peculiar and distinguishing feature of his religion. This feature stands forth embodied in all

the instructions of the Great Teacher. Philanthropy is the predominant trait in the life of him "who went about doing good."

In another life, the measure of our felicity in the mansions of the just, will be in proportion to our concern for the glory of God, and for the promotion of the happiness of our fellow-creatures. A religious man constantly strives to render the present state as much as possible like the abode towards which his thoughts are elevated. His constant occupation is to mitigate suffering, banish prejudice and hatred, and calm the fury of party. All his relations are those of peace and love.

CHAPTER XXII.

OF THE RAPIDITY OF LIFE.

IN considering the different ages of life, the first sentiment I feel, is gratitude for the variety of pleasures destined for us by nature. Thrice happy for us, if we knew how to taste the charms of all the situations through which we pass ! Instead of this, we first regret infancy, then youth, then mature age. The happy period is always that which is no more.

It is a great folly to sadden the present, in looking back upon the past, as though it had been darkened by no shadow of a cloud. The sorrows which nature sends us in infancy resemble spring showers, the traces of which are effaced by a passing breeze. The pains and alarms of each age have been chiefly the work of men. Who cannot remember the violent palpitations which he felt,

when exposed to the searching eye of his companions, he went forward to excuse his not having prepared his task, his translation or theme, at school? I have seen situations more perilous, since that time, but no misfortunes have awakened more bitterness, than the preference granted by the tutor to the theme of another over mine. The beautiful age, for a frivolous being is youth; for the ambitious, maturity; for the recluse, old age; for a reasonable man, each age: for heaven has reserved peculiar pleasures for each.

The second sentiment I experience, in contemplating life, is, regret to see the moments so rapidly gliding away. Time flies, and days and years steal away as rapidly as hours. Still, some complain of the burden of time, and endure cruel suffering from not knowing how to employ it.

To prolong my days, I neither ask the elixir of life from alchymists, nor precepts from physicians. A severe regimen tends to abridge life. Multiplied privations give a sadness to the spirit, more noxious than the prescribed remedies are salutary. Besides, what is physical without moral life; that is to say, improvement and enjoyment? Physicians vaunt the miracles of abstinence and a careful regimen in the case of Cornaro, the Venetian, who was born dying, and yet spun out the thread of life with so much care that he

existed a century. To attain this result, he weighed his aliment, and marked every hour of the day, with the most minute exactness. Bacon cites the case, but jests upon a man who believed himself living, because, in fact, he was not dead.

Moderation, cheerfulness, and the happy employment of time, furnish the best means of living as many days as nature permits; and the regimen of philosophic moralists has an effect more certain than that of physicians.

Every one has observed, that a year in youth presents a long perspective; and that the further we advance in our career, the more the course of time seems to accelerate. Let us strive to investigate the causes which so modify our judgments, with a view, if it be possible, to avoid them.

There is one inevitable cause, experience; at sixteen, what an illimitable prospective space is seen in the sixteen years that are to succeed! The termination of the latter period is lost to vision in the future, as the commencement of the first years are effaced from the memory of the past. But, in touching the goal which seemed so distant, we have discovered a scale by which the mind's eye measures the future. Impatient youth, burning to overleap the interval which separates the object from their desires, strive to accelerate the tardy hours. In mature age, on the contrary, seeing

every day bringing us nearer the termination of our career, we begin to regret the want of power to arrest the march of time. Thus our weakness hastens the flight which we desire to delay. Let us be less fearful of the uncertain future, and the hours will lose their desolating swiftness.

Finally, in our youth, all objects being new, produce the vivid impression of novelty. Every instant is filled with landmarks of memory, because in every instant a new sensation is produced, and a new link in the chain of the succession of ideas. As we advance in time, objects imperceptibly cease to excite our curiosity. We pass by beautiful objects and striking events, which once filled us with transport or surprise, with a carelessness which fails to fix them in our memory. We return mechanically to the occupations of the preceding day, scarcely noting the transit of those monotonous periods which were rendered remarkable neither by disgust nor pleasure. Let us avoid this mental carelessness, which gives new speed to the flight of time, and is so fatal to happiness. Friends of humanity, of literature, of the arts, of true enjoyment, and, above all, of real religion ; let us preserve the mind in its freshness, the imagination in its youthful brilliancy. Let us thus arrest the happy moments ; and let us preserve the enthusiasm of youth enlightened by the taste of mature age, for everything which merits our admiration.

I can confidently affirm, that I have long since learned to find some of my purest and most abiding satisfactions in the memory of the past. I repeat all its happier passages and incidents. I recall the bright days, verdant landscapes, loved persons, and joyous sensations, from their shadowy mansions. I renew my youthful sports; and watch for the trout along the flush spring brooks. I seat myself again on the sunny banks of the pleasant spots of my career. I would be glad to convey some idea of the vivid pleasure I experience, after a lapse of forty winters, from the deeply impressed remembrance of one beautiful spring morning, after a long and severe winter, when I was still a school-boy. The vast masses of snow were beginning to melt. The birds of prey, shut up in their retreats during the bitter winter, sailed forth in the mild clear blue. The birds whistled; and my heart expanded with joy and delight unknown, in the same degree, before or since. The place where these thoughts, comprising my youthful anticipations, hopes and visions, occurred, will never be obliterated from my mind while memory holds her seat. I have a thousand such treasured recollections, with which I can at any time, and to a certain extent, cheer pain, sorrow and decay. These are enjoyments stored beyond the reach of fortune, which we can prolong, and renew at pleasure.

If we desire that our days should not be abridged, we must love retreat. The immediate result of this shelter is to keep off a crowd of officious and indolent people. There are those who would not think of taking our money, and who yet will steal hours and days from us without scruple. They seem not to realize the value of these fractions of time which are the material life.

But while the idle rob us of hours, we ourselves sacrifice years. A great portion of our race, deafened by the clamour of the passions, agitated by feverish dreams, are scarcely conscious of existence; and, awakening for a moment, at death, regret that they have been long on the earth, and yet have not lived. A few others, after having been long swept onward by the torrent, taught at last by experience, resist, land, and fix their sojourn far from the tumult; and finally, begin to taste the pleasant consciousness of existence. Why not prolong these final hours to the utmost? If our pursuits interdict us from the independent command of our time, we may, at least, consecrate portions of every evening to retreat, in order to review the past, pause on the present, and prepare for the future. Thus, making every day count in accumulating the pleasant stores of memory, we add it to the happy days of the past, and no longer allow life to vanish like a dream

It is, more than all, in converse with ourselves, that we give a right direction to the mind, elevation to the soul, and gentleness and firmness to the character. Life is a book in which we every day read a page. We ought to note down every instructive incident that passes.

The admirable Marcus Aurelius took delight in converse with himself; and learned to find enjoyment in the present by extracting from the past lessons for the future. I never fail to be affected when I read the account which he gives of all those persons whose cares had concurred to form his character and his manners. "I learned," says he, "of my grandfather Verus, to be gentle and complaisant. The reputation which my father left, and the memory of his good actions which has been preserved, taught me modesty. My mother formed me to piety, taught me to be liberal, and not even to meditate, still less to do a wrong.

"I owe it to my governor that I am patient of labour, have but few wants, know how to work with my own hands, meddle with no business that does not concern me, and give no encouragement to informers.

"Diognetus taught me not to be amused with frivolities, to yield no credit to impostors, and to have no faith in conjuration and superstition. I learned of him to permit every one to speak to me

with entire freedom, and to apply myself wholly to philosophy.

“Rusticus made me perceive that I needed to correct my manners, that I ought to avoid the pride of the sophists, and not use effort to inspire the people with admiration of my patience and austerity of life; to be always ready to pardon those who had offended me, and to receive them kindly whenever they were disposed to resume their former intercourse.

“I learned of Apollonius to be at the same time frank and firm in my designs, to follow no guide but my reason, even in the smallest matters, and to be always composed, even under the most acute sufferings. By his example I was instructed that it is possible to be at once severe and gentle.

“Sextus taught me to govern my house as a good father, to preserve a simple gravity without affectation, to attempt to divine and anticipate the wishes and necessities of my friends; to endure, with calmness and patience, the ignorant and presumptuous who speak without thinking what they say; and to sustain relations of kindness with all.

“I learned from Alexander the grammarian, in disputation to use no injurious words in reply to my antagonist.

“Alexander, the Platonist, instructed me to be always prompt to render all those good offices which the bonds of society demand.

“I owe to my brother Severus, the love which I have for truth and justice. From him I derived the desire to govern my states by equal laws, and to reign in such a manner as that my subjects might possess perfect liberty.

“I thank the Divinity for having given me virtuous ancestors, a good father, a good mother, a good sister, good preceptors, and good friends ; in a word, all the good things I could have desired.”

A crowd of useful thoughts cannot but flow from such self-converse. Hold every day one of these solitary conversations with yourself. This is the way in which to attain the highest relish of existence ; and, if I may so say, to cast anchor in the river of life.

CHAPTER XXIII.

ON DEATH.

IF we were to allow ourselves to express the wish that we might never die, an absurd wish, which, perhaps, every man has sometimes indulged, a moralist might say, "Suppose it were granted, where would be the end of dissension, hatred, revenge? Where would the victim whom injustice pursues, find an asylum and repose?" To all this it is sufficient to reply, that if we accuse heaven for having subjected us to the penalty of death, we have not less reason to accuse her for having often rendered death desirable, as a relief from greater evils. Instead of showing herself so niggardly in bestowing happy moments, why did she not spare humanity the evils that rendered death a comparative release?

There are, as I believe, more solid reasons to justify the great Creator in rendering death an inevitable allotment. When, undertaking to reform the universe in my day-dreams, I render our earthly existence eternal, I find no difficulty in imagining all the evils which afflict us removed. But I strain my imagination to no purpose to give form and reality to those pleasures which shall be adequate to replace those which this new order of things cannot admit. Suppose that it were no longer necessary that generation should succeed generation; and that death were banished from the earth; the same beings, without hopes or fears, would always cover its surface. No more loves; no more parental tenderness; no more filial piety! Flattering hopes forsake the bosom along with enchanting remembrances. All those affections which give value to life owe their existence to death. A wise man sees in life a gift which he ought not to sacrifice. In learning how to live, he instructs himself how to die.

We must sometimes look Death in the face to judge how we shall be able to sustain his approach. It is not necessary often to repeat this stern examination, as it presents gloomy ideas, even to the most energetic minds. Another manner of contemplating the final scene, produces all the useful

results of the first, and presents nothing afflicting. It consists in observing the influence which death ought to exercise over life. This term, unknown, but always near, should render our duties more sacred, our affections more tender, our pleasures more vivid. In noting the rapidity of the flight of time, a wise man seizes upon those ideas which disturb the hours of the multitude, to enhance the charm of his own thoughts. It was not without an aim, that certain of the ancient philosophers placed in their festal hall a death's head decked with roses.

Those who say that, in one point of view, death is nothing, may be thought to affect the semblance of courage. They speak, in fact, only simple truth. The term death is the sign of a purely negative idea; and denotes an instant impossible for thought to measure. It is not yet death, or it is past; and there is no interval.

Without doubt, the circumstances which precede it are extremely afflicting. Sudden deaths ought to cost us fewer tears than any others. Yet we hear it repeated, with a sigh, "the unfortunate sufferer lingered but a few hours." Was not that space sufficiently long, when the moments were counted by agony? Let us not tinge our views by the colouring of egotism; and we shall perceive

in this prompt departure, two motives for consolation ; that the deceased, whom we regret, saw not the long approach of death in advance ; and, that, in meeting it, he experienced a brief pang. Such an end is worthy of envy, and is the last benefit of heaven.

So died my father, the best of fathers, whom every one recognized by his force of character, his gentleness and serenity. He did not dazzle, either by his vivacity of mind, or the variety of his acquirements. But he so said the simplest things, as to render them the best. During sixty-five years he shared the pains of others, but never added to them. One day, having experienced unaccustomed fatigue, he retired early, and a few moments after, slept in death. Such a death, without pain and alarm, was worthy of a life so excellent, that, to render him happy in the life to come, it would be only necessary to leave him the remembrance of what he had been, and what he had done upon earth.

A fact, recognised by numberless observing physicians is, that the last agony of a good man is rarely violent. It is probable, that in regard to all forms of death, mankind generally entertain the most erroneous conceptions. The vulgar, naturally embracing ideas that terrify them, believe that the

dissolution of our earthly being is accompanied by all conceivable torments. It is probable, on the contrary, that, if we are real Christians, in entering upon eternal repose, we experience sensations analagous to those of a wearied man who feels the sweet influence of sleep stealing gently upon him.

These sensations, it is true, can be imagined to belong only to the last moments. Cruel maladies may precede them. But it would seem that nature invariably employs some means to mitigate the evils which she inflicts. Among mortal diseases, those which are severely painful are equally rapid; while those which are slow in their progress are comparatively free from pain. They allow the patient time to accustom himself to the idea of his departure. It is common for those who die, thus to solace themselves alternately with resignation and hope.

A spectacle, touching to the heart, and, unhappily, too common, is presented in the case of a fair and florid youth, struck with a pulmonary malady. Absolute unconsciousness of danger often accompanies this cruel disease to the last moment. We are perfectly aware that the patient cannot survive the coming winter. We hear him pantingly discuss the projects which he expects to execute with his

companions when health and spring shall return. The contrast of his daily increasing debility with his gentle gaiety, and of his future projects, with the rapid approach of death, makes the heart bleed. Every one is pained for him but himself. The hectic fever imparts a kind of joyous inspiration; and nature, to absolve itself for inflicting death on one so young, leads him to his last hour in tranquil security. Death is to him as a sleep.

It is certain, that physical sufferings are not those which infuse the utmost bitterness into this last cup. The gloomy thoughts with which death is invested are excited much more keenly by those affections which attach us to earth and our kind. We may well hold the understanding of those ambitious persons in disdain who instruct us, that when they have finished their vast projects their days shall thenceforward glide in peace and serenity. Death uniformly surprises them, tormenting themselves in the pursuit of their shadows. Others, with less show of stupidity, repine, because death strikes them reposing upon their pleasures. Their groans are caused by having forgotten the rapidity and evanescence of their joys. They had not known how to give them an additional charm in saying, "We possess them but for a day."

But suppose we regret neither ambitious projects nor transient pleasures, may we not wish to live longer for our children? I attempt not to inculcate an impracticable or exaggerated system. There is a situation in which death is fearful. There is a period in which it would seem as if man ought not to die. It commences when one has become a parent, and terminates when his sustaining hand is no longer indispensable to his family.

If Heaven calls us to quit life before this epoch, all consolations resemble the remedies which palliate the pains of the dying, without possessing efficacy to remove them. Still we ought not to believe that there can exist a situation in which a good man can find no alleviation for his sorrows. In quitting a life which he would wish to retain longer, for the happiness of those most dear to him, he may derive force and magnanimity from the thought that he owes it to himself to leave an example of courage and decent dignity in the last act; that he may show the influence of piety and resignation, and the hope and discipline of that religion which forbids its disciple to struggle against the inevitable lot.

The approach of death always brings associations of gloom when it comes in advance of old age, to

destroy the tender affections. In the slow and natural course of years, it is an event as simple, as little to be deprecated, as the other occurrences of life. Alas! during a short sojourn, we see those who were most dear continually falling around us. We soon retain a less number with us than exist already in another world. The family is divided. I am not surprised that it becomes a matter of indifference to a wise man to remain with his present friends, or to go and rejoin those who are gone before him into the invisible state.

As long as our children have need of our support, we resemble a traveller charged with business of extreme importance. As soon as these cares become useless, we resemble him who travels at leisure and by chance; and who takes up his lodging for the night wherever the setting sun surprises him. For me, I see the second epoch drawing near. If I reach it, I shall bless heaven for having awarded me a sufficient number of years, and for having diffused over them so few pains.

Let us not charge that man with weakness who, when on the eve of departure for distant and untravelled countries, is perceived to impart the intonation and tenderness of sorrow to his adieus. Ought we to exact more of him whom death is

about to conduct to that undiscovered country, "from whose bourne no traveller returns?" I would not seem to affect an austere and unnatural courage. But whenever delivered from the only heart-rending agony, I will hope and strive to preserve sufficient tranquillity of mind to impress the sentiment on those I love, that we ought, with becoming dignity, to submit ourselves to the immutable laws of nature; that complaint is useless and murmuring unjust; and that it becomes us, with transient but subdued emotion, to say, as we receive the final embrace, "May we meet again!"

Fear, absolutely useless, gratuitous fear, probably constitutes much the largest proportion of the whole mass of human misery; and of this proportion the fear of death is a principal part. There are but very few people who, in examining the feeling of apprehension most constantly present to their minds, will not find it to be the dread of death. The whole observation which I have made upon human nature, has only enlightened me the more as to the universality and extent of the influence of this evil. I see it infusing bitterness into the bosoms of the young, before they are as yet capable of reflection; and ceasing not to inspire its terrors into the heart, which has

experienced the sorrows of fourscore winters. I see little difference in the alarm with which it darkens the mind of the heir, elate with youthful hope, and the galley slave: those apparently the most happy, and the tenants of penitentiaries and lazarus-houses. All cling alike convulsively to life, and shudder at the thought of death.

Part, and perhaps the greater part, of this fear is a sad heritage, which has been transmitted down to us, through many generations. Our education, religious ceremonies, domestic manners, in short, all the influences of the present institutions of society tend to increase this evil. I am well aware, at the same time, that the number of those, who will admit it to be an evil, is but small. Most view it as it has been considered in all Christian countries, from time immemorial, as an instrument in the hand of God and his servants, to awe and restrain the mind, to call it from illusions and vanities, and reduce it to the seriousness and obedience of religion. My hope of producing useful impressions is, with the small but growing number, (in the next age, I trust it will be a majority) who have but little faith in amendment and conversion that grows out of the base and servile principle of fear, and, least of all, the fear of death; who believe that a great reform, a

thorough amelioration of our species, will never be effected, until it is made a radical principle of our whole discipline, and all our social institutions, to bring this servile passion completely under the controul of our reason. With these it is a deep and fixed conviction, that every thing base, degrading and destructive of intellect and improvement, readily associates with fear; and that the basis of true religion, of generous conception, of high thoughts and really noble character, is firmly laid in a young mind, when trained to become as destitute of fear, as if it were conscious of being a sinless angel, above the reach of pain or death.

It would be to no purpose for me to pause in this place, to obviate the strictures of those who will denounce this doctrine, by quoting from the scriptures the frequent inculcations of the “fear of the Lord,” and the Apostle’s declaration, that by the “terrors of the Lord we persuade men.” The true and religious fear, inculcated in the scriptures, not only has no relation to the passion I am discussing, but cannot exist any more than the other requisite traits of religious character, in a bosom swayed by the grovelling and selfish passion of servile fear. The fear inculcated in the scriptures is inseparably connected with reverence and love.

That nature has implanted in our bosoms an instinctive dread of death, I readily admit. But fear, as a factitious and unnatural addition to the true instincts of human nature, has been so accumulated by rolling down through a hundred generations, that we are in no condition to know the degree, in which nature intended we should possess it. We have innumerable base propensities, which we charge upon nature, that are, in fact, no more, than the guilty heritage, bequeathed us by our ancestors. Nature could have implanted no higher degree of instinctive dread of death, than just what was requisite, to preserve the race from prodigal waste, or rash exposure of a gift, which, once lost, is irretrievable. If nature has inwrought in any constitution one particle of fear, beyond what was required for this result, she has, as in all other excessive endowments, granted reason and judgment, to regulate, and reduce it to its due subordination.

Will not religion achieve the great triumph of casting out the base principle of fear? I would be the last to deny, or undervalue the trophies of true religion. I have no doubt that religion has, in innumerable instances, extracted the pain and poison from the sting of death. More than this, it would unquestionably produce this triumph in

every case, if every individual were completely under the influence of the true principle. It would attain this end by processes and discipline exactly concurrent, if not similar, with those I am about to propose. But it is a lamentable fact, that but few comparatively are under the influence of true religion. Of those, whom charity deems most sincerely pious, some, under all professions and forms, exhibit, on the bed of dangerous sickness, the same fear of death with the rest.

The triumph over the fear of death, which I would inculcate, should not be tested by the equivocal deportment of the patient, in the near view of death; but by his own joyous consciousness of deliverance from this tormenting bondage, during his whole life. Let fear bring what bitterness it may into the last few hours, it can bear but little proportion to the long agony of a whole life, passed in "bondage through fear of death." To produce the desired triumph, the highest training of philosophy should concur with the paternal spirit, and the immortal hopes of the gospel; and a calm, reasoning, unboasting fearlessness of death should enable us to taste all the little of pure and innocent joy, that may be found between the cradle and the grave as unmolested, as unsprinkled with this fear, as if the destroyer were not among the works of God.

The terrific and undefinable images of horror, that imagination affixes to the term DEATH, are founded in an entire misconception. The word is the sign of no positive idea whatever. It conjures up a shadowy horror to the mind, finely delineated, as a poetic personage, by Milton; and implies, some agony that is supposed to lie between the limits of existence and non-existence, or existence in another form. This is simple illusion. So long as we feel, death is not; and when we cease to feel, or commence feeling in a changed form, death has been. Who can tell where waking consciousness terminates, and sleep commences? He can tell us, what death is. Every one is conscious of having passed through this change; but no one can give any account, what were his sensations in the dividing moment of interval between wakefulness and sleep.

Imagination is allowed to settle all the circumstances, and form all the associations belonging to the supposed agony of this event. It is one of the few important incidents in life, upon which reason is but seldom allowed to fix a calm and severe scrutiny. It is dreadful, says common apprehension, for it is the breaking up the long and tender partnership, and producing a separation between the body and the soul; dreadful, because it is the

wages of sin, and is appointed to be a perpetual memorial of the righteous displeasure of God in view of sin; dreadful, because a departure of the spirit from the regions of the living, and the light of the sun, into an unknown and eternal state. Suns will revolve, moons wax and wane, years, revolutions, ages, counted by all the particles of mist in the sea, will elapse, but the place, whence the spirit is gone, will never know it more. It is terrible, says common apprehension, for it is often preceded and accompanied by severe pain and convulsive struggle.

Then, too, the attendants in the sick-room often inspect the extremities of the patient, and petrify the bystanders with the words, he is struck with death; as though the grisly phantom king of the poet's song had invisibly glided in, and, with his icy sceptre, given his victim the blow of mortal destiny. Who knows not that, though there are usually mortal symptoms, which enable an experienced eye to foresee approaching dissolution, the term "death-struck" imports nothing but the weakest vulgar prejudice, a prejudice under the influence of which millions have been suffered to expire, that might have been roused! Innumerable persons, pronounced to be in that situation, have actually recovered; and no moment, in the ordi-

nary forms of disease, can with any certainty be pronounced beyond hope, but that which succeeds the last sigh.

Then there are conversations and hymns and funeral odes and Night Thoughts, which speak of the coldness, silence and eternal desolation of the grave ; as though the unconscious sleeper felt the chill of the superincumbent clay, the darkness of his narrow house, or this terrible isolation from the living. The pale and peaceful corse is contemplated with a look of horror. Two, of stout heart and tried friendship, abide near the kneaded clod, until the living are relieved from their ghostly terrors, by its deposition out of their sight in the narrow house. The family, the children, the friends alike showing the creeping horror, glide quick and silently on tiptoe through the apartment, where the sleeper lies. The first nightfall after the decease is one of peculiar and unmitigated horror. The family, however disinclined to union before, this evening unite, with that impress on their countenances, which words reach not.

Need we wonder, that in a Christian country, and among families of the best training, such impressions have become so universal, that they, who would be reputed brave, blazon their courage, by affirming their readiness to sleep in a cemetery, or

the funeral vault of a church? It requires no extraordinary effort, and nothing more than the simple triumph of reason among the faculties, to enable any man, to sleep alone in a charnel-house with as little dread, as in the apartment of an inn, so that the places were alike in comfort and salubrity. It does not require us to be wise, or courageous; but simply not cowards and fools, to feel as little horror in the view of corpses, as statues of plaster or marble. One of the most terrible ideas of death, after all, is, that we shall thus, immediately upon our decease, inflict this shrinking revulsion of terror upon all, who look at our remains.

The view, which reason takes of the sick and dying bed is, that, in the far greater number of mortal cases, the transition from life to death is as imperceptible, as the progress of the sun and the seasons. One faculty dies after another. The victim has received the three warnings unconsciously. Ordinarily, a person may be said to have paid a third part of his tribute of mortality at forty-five; half at fifty-five; and the whole at three score and ten.

When acute and severe sickness assails the patient, he has passed through what may be called the agony of death at a very early period of his

disease. His chief suffering is past, as soon as the irritability and the vigorous powers of life have been broken down. When the disorder produces insensibility, the dull sleep, that precedes the final rest of the tomb, is already creeping upon the patient ; and severe suffering is precluded. If there are convulsions after this, as often happens, they are seldom more than spasmodic movements, impressed by the nervous action upon the tendons, more terrible to the beholder, than the sufferer ; differing little from those starts and struggles, with which many persons in high health commence sleeping and waking.

Reason, calmly surveying the case of the dying person himself, sees many alleviations, of which imagination, sketching under the influence of the dread of death, takes no account. He finds himself, in this new predicament, the absorbing object of all interests and of all solicitude and affection. It is not in human nature that this should not call up complacent emotions, and slumbering affections from their secret cells. Of those who preserve the exercise of their faculties entire to the last, many instances are recorded of persons who had shewn the most unmanly dread of death in their health, that have met dissolution with the calmness of perfect self-possession. Of the rest, a great number

die with little more apparent pain and struggle than accompany the act of sleeping. In a great number of cases which I have witnessed, I have paused in doubt, whether the person had yielded his last sigh or not, after he had actually deceased. To soften the last infliction, nature almost invariably veils it under a low delirium, or absolute unconsciousness.

It is impossible to imagine a more obvious and unquestionable principle of philosophy, than that every reasoning faculty of our nature must declare to us, loudly and unequivocally, and with an influence as strong as reason can command, that it is wisdom, nay, the dictate of the least portion of common sense, to dread, to resist, to repine, to groan as little as possible, in view of an endurance absolutely inevitable. If it be hard to sustain when met with a fearless, resigned, and un murmuring spirit, it must certainly be still harder, when we are obliged to bend our necks to it with the excruciating addition of shrinking fear, dreadful anticipation, and ineffectual struggles to evade it, and with murmurs and groans at finding the inutility of these efforts. Innumerable examples prove to us, that nature has kindly endowed us with reason and mental vigour to such an extent, that, under the influence of divine aid, and Scrip-

tural principle, no possible form of suffering can be presented, over which the good man may not manifest, and has not manifested, a complete triumph.

Of these innumerable examples, it is only necessary to cite those of the martyrs, of all forms of religion. These prove farther, that an undaunted self-possession in every conceivable shape and degree of agony, was not the result of a rare and peculiar temperament, a want of sensibility, or the possession of uncommon physical courage; that it was not because there was no perception of danger, or susceptibility of pain; this magnanimity, this impassibility to fear and pain and death, has been exhibited in nearly equal degrees by people of every age, each sex, and all conditions, and arose from the sublime hopes inspired by divine revelation. Let the proper motive be supplied, let the martyr have had the common influence of the training of his faith, and the consequence failed not. All the shades and varieties of natural and mental difference of character were noted in the deportment of the sufferers. But they were alike in the stern proof of a courage which defied death. The fact is proved by them as strongly as moral fact can be proved, that the mind of every individual might find in itself, with the blessing and favour

of God, self-possession and vigour, to enable it to display an entire ascendancy over the fear and pain of death.

No one will deny, that the primitive Christian, put in conflict with a hungry lion ; that Rogers at the Smithfield stake, exhibiting the serene and sublime triumph of mind over matter, and of the spirit over the body,—is one of the most imposing spectacles we can witness ; one of the clearest proofs we can contemplate, that we have that within us which is not all of clay, nor all mortal ; or doubt, that these persons endured infinitely less physical pain, in consequence of their genuine Christianity producing an heroic self-possession, than they would have suffered, had they met their torture in paroxysms of terror, shrinking, and self abandonment.

One of the direct fruits of the intrepidity we would wish to see universal, arising from the powerful influence of Christian principle, is, that it will give its possessor all possible chances for preserving health and life. It saves him from the influence of fear, a passion among the most debilitating and adverse to life of any to which our nature is subject. Braced by his courage, he passes untouched amidst a contagious epidemic, to which the timid and apprehensive nature falls a victim. In danger

it gives him coolness and self-command, to discover and avail himself of all his chances of wise resistance, or probable escape. In sickness, he has all the aids to recover which nature allows, in being delivered from the most dangerous symptom in innumerable maladies, the debilitating persuasion of the patient, that he shall not rise from his sickness.

The fact, that an evil is felt to be alleviated which is shared in common with all around us, has been generally recognized. We all know, that the same person who is most beneficent, most active in his benevolence, and large in his wishes to do good, would shrink from a great calamity, which he saw himself destined to encounter, for the first and the last among his whole race. But inform him, that by an impartial award he shares it in common with all his kind, and you will aid to reconcile him at once to his lot. Whether the spirit of his resignation in this case be pure, or polluted in its origin, it is not my present purpose to enquire. It is sufficient to be assured, that there is such a feeling deeply inherent in human nature. The suffering patient, as he lays himself down to part from all friends, to be severed from all ties, to see the green earth, the bright sun, and the visible heavens no more, and to be conscious,

that the circle of ages will continue its revolutions without ever bringing him back to the forsaken scene, cannot repine, that he has been put upon this probation alone. Of all the countless millions, that have passed away, and been replaced by others, like the vernal leaves, death has stood before every solitary individual of the mighty mass, the same phantom king of terrors. Each has contemplated the same inexorable, irreversible award, been held in the same suspense of hopes, and fears, and compelled to endure the same struggles. Looking upon the immense mortal drama of ages, the actors seem slowly and imperceptibly to enter, and depart from the scene. But in the lapse of one short age, the hopes, fears, loves, and hatreds of all the countless millions have vanished, to be replaced by those of another generation. The heart swells at the recollection how much each of these mortals must have endured, in this stern and inevitable encounter, as measured by our own suffering in the same case. It is only necessary for the patient to extend his vision a few years in advance of his own decease ; and his friends, his children, his visitants, all that surround him, will, in their turn, recline on the same bed. Who cannot feel the palpable folly of repining at an evil shared with all that have been, are, or will

be ! And who, but an idiot, will not seriously prepare for the great change ?

The only adequate remedy for the fear of death, is the well-founded hope of a blessed immortality, built on the great doctrines of Revelation. We lie down in pain and agony, with a spirit of easy endurance, if we have a confident persuasion that, during the night, we shall have shaken off the cause of our sufferings, and shall rise to renewed health and freshness in the morning. Death can bring little terror to him, who believes that its darkness will instantly be replaced by the light of another scene : and that the separation from friends in the visible land, is only rejoining the more numerous group, who have already become citizens of the invisible country. To what extent am I the subject of this hope myself, and whence do I derive my belief ? I believe unhesitatingly, and without a doubt, that I shall, in some way, exactly provided for by Him who made me, exist after death ; and as simply conscious that I am the same person, as I am now in the morning, that I slept at night. Do I derive this conviction from books and reasonings ? I am by no means sure that I do ; though the Gospel assuredly speaks directly to my heart. I do ready homage to the talents and learning of Locke, Paley, Doddridge, Lardner, and Hall, and

a cloud of reasoning witnesses, of whom every Christian may well be proud; and, most of all, to the profound and admirable Butler.

I hear the Author of our faith directly declaring a resurrection and immortality. A single asseveration from such a source were enough. It seems to me that he discusses it, as one who was aware that it was already interwoven in the sentiments and hearts of his hearers, upon which he might predicate his doctrines, as upon a thousand other facts, which we can clearly perceive, he considers already admitted by his hearers.

All the universe proclaims a Deity. The grateful verdure, the matin freshness, the glad voices, the aroma of flowers, the earth, the rolling clouds, the sun, all the lamps that will burn in the firmament by night, my own happy consciousness in witnessing this impressive scene, cry out *a God*. To my heart, it is the first, the simplest, most obvious thought, presenting itself, it seems to me, as soon as the consciousness of my own existence; certainly susceptible of as little doubt. I yield myself to the conviction. My heart swells with gratitude, confidence, and love. So good, so beneficent a Being can do nothing but good, in this or any other world, to him who loves and trusts him, and strives to obey his laws.

Nature and Revelation both unite to testify, that I am immortal. Not a particle of matter, for aught that appears, can be annihilated. Will the nobler thoughts, the warmer affections perish, as though they had not been? We ask our senses, and they can give us no hope. The body lives, and we speak of it as including the conscious being. We see it die, pass under the empire of corruption, moulder, and incorporate with its kindred elements. The sensible evidence, that the person exists, is entirely destroyed. The most insatiate appetite of our natures, however, craves continued existence, and ceases not to seek for it. The enquirer after immortality cannot but be in earnest in this pursuit. The arguments of the venerable sages of old, are spread before him. From the soul's nature, from the unity of consciousness, the incorruptibility of thought, the everlasting progress, of which our faculties are capable, the strong and unquenchable desire of posthumous fame, the sacredness of earthly friendships, and similar arguments, they strove to establish, on the basis of reasoning, the conviction of immortality.

From these reasonings I repair to the Scriptures. A strange book, utterly unlike any writings that have appeared before, declares that we shall exist for ever. The religion which has arisen from

this book, in its whole structure and dispensation, is predicated on the assumed fact, that we shall exist for ever in another life ; happy or miserable, according to our deeds on earth. Jesus, “ the author and finisher of this faith,” announces himself “ the resurrection and the life ;” with a voice of power calls his dead friend from the tomb ; declares, that death has no power over himself ; that, after suffering a violent death, on the third day from that event, he shall arise from the dead. He arises, according to his promise ; and, in the midst of his awe-struck friends, he visibly ascends to the celestial world. Millions, as by one impulse, catch the spirit of this wonderful book ; love each other with a new and single-hearted affection ; as unlike the spirit of all former ties of kindness and love, as the doctrines of this religion are different from those of paganism. The new sect look with a careless eye upon whatever is transitory ; and will submit to privation, derision and torture, of whatever form, rather than waver, or equivocate, in declaring themselves subjects of this hope of immortality. This christian hope, in every period from the time of its author, has made its way to the heart of millions, who have laid themselves down on their last bed, and felt the approach of their last sleep, expecting, as confidently to open

their eyes on an eternal morning, as the weary labourer, at his evening rest, trusts that he shall see the brightness of the morrow's dawn.

For myself, I feel that I am immortal, and that those fellow sojourners, to whom I have been attached by the affection of long intimacy, and the reception of many and great kindnesses, will exist with me hereafter. I pretend to conceive nothing, I wish to enquire nothing, about the mode, the place and circumstances. I should as soon think of disturbing myself, by endeavouring to conceive the ideas that might be imparted by a sixth sense. It is sufficient that my heart declares, that a being who has seen this glorious world, cherished these warm affections, entertained these illimitable aspirations, felt these longings after immortality, indulged "these thoughts, that wander through eternity," cannot have been doomed by Him, who gave them, to have them quenched for ever in annihilation. Even an illusion, so glorious, would be worth purchasing at the price of a world. I would affirm, even to repetition, that there is given us that high and stern power, which implies a courage superior to any conflict, and which gives the mind a complete ascendancy over any danger, pain or torture, which belongs to life or death.

It is only to a firm and unhesitating faith in the

great truths of the Gospel, that it becomes as easy and natural to die, as to sleep. Glorious and blessed hope, the hope of meeting our friends, in the eternal land of those who truly and greatly live for ever! There we shall renew our youth, and “mount as on the wings of eagles;”

————— “And we shall meet,
Where parting tears shall cease to flow :
And, when I think thereon, almost I long to go !”

CHAPTER XXIV.

CONCLUSION.

I SHALL have attained my purpose if these sketches should produce any degree of conviction that man, in exercising his faculties, can mitigate his pains and multiply his pleasures, and, consequently, should serve as the outlines of a plan for reducing the pursuit of happiness to an art. I am aware that no view could be offered more contrary to the prevalent opinions in society. The morose and the frivolous make common cause to attack it. To them the very idea seems absurd; and the most indulgent among them question the good faith of him who announces it.

To such grave and learned authorities, and more, even to the general suffrage against it, I might dare to oppose counterbalancing authorities. From Socrates to Franklin, I see philosophers who have

been persuaded that man may be directed in the art, and instructed in the science of happiness; and that his faculties may be enlarged to pursue it. Who are the men that have entertained this persuasion? The very flower of the human race. Was each individual of them surrounded by those happy circumstances which would naturally inspire the same philosophy? They were persons who had experienced all the conditions of life. As if nature had studied to prove, by great examples, that our happiness depends upon our reason more than upon our circumstances, Epictetus lived in chains, and Marcus Aurelius on a throne.

Which of the sciences did the admirable Socrates chiefly esteem? The single one which teaches us to live as we ought. Let it not be said that I substitute one science for another; and that Socrates taught morals, and not my pretended science of happiness. With the Greeks, morals had a perfectly definite end. Their philosophers held all their teaching subservient to conducting their disciples to happiness. Illustrious men! we disdain their maxims, but still revere their names. What fruit have we obtained from the boasted light and improvement of the age? We speak with enthusiasm of those sciences which they judged frivolous; and we treat as chimerical, those studies which they judged alone worthy of human nature.

Suppose it had been said to these philosophers, "You will never reform the human race; and, instead of profitless dreams about wisdom and happiness, you ought to desist from subjects so futile, and consecrate your vigils to sciences more worthy to occupy your thoughts." Would they not have smiled with pity upon such counsel? Had they deigned to reply, would they not have said, "We are well aware that we shall not purify the heart of the wicked of its pride, envy and cupidity; but shall we derive no glory from having confirmed some good men in their career? In the midst of storms we felt our energies invigorated as we perceived that our spirits were in accordance with theirs. However feeble may have been the influence of our writings, affront not humanity by supposing that ours, however partial may be their circulation, will, nowhere, find minds worthy to profit by them. Perhaps they will kindle the holy love of virtue in some of those who may read them in the youthful age of unsophisticated and generous resolutions. Few, who read, will practise our doctrine in all its extent. Almost every one will be indebted to it for some solitary principles. It is possible we may never have numerous disciples. But we shall have some in all countries and in all time. It is a truth that ought to satisfy us, that such discussions are based neither upon exaggera-

tion nor enthusiasm. The science of happiness would indeed be chimerical if we expected that it would impart the same charms to all predicaments in which our lot might cast us. Instead of indulging such visionary hopes, if these discussions dissipate the errors which veil the true good from our eyes, if we learn to bring together all the easy and innocent pleasures, and to render the painful moments of life more rapid, we have been taught an art which it is possible to demonstrate and improve to an indefinite extent."

Does this art appear difficult? Let any one be named which it exacts no effort to acquire. Will it be thought that it cannot become of general utility? Will professors of the highest reputation, cease to teach eloquence because they do not form as many orators as they have pupils? The more maturely I have reflected upon the art in question, the more clearly I am convinced that it may be assimilated to the other arts. It differs from them only in its superior importance. The interest and attention that all the rest merit should be measured only by their relation, more or less direct, to this first of all arts. To settle the utility of any science, law, enterprise, or action, I know no better measure than to note its influence on human happiness.

If moral lessons leave but a transient influence,

it may be attributed to two principal causes ; the weakness of our nature, and the contagion of example. A third belongs to those who teach us the doctrine of morals, and is found in their exaggeration of their doctrine. They elevate the altar of wisdom upon steep mountains ; and discourage our first steps, by proclaiming the painful efforts necessary to scale them. From the sadness of the ministers of the worship, it would not be inferred, the divinity of the place was liberal in dispensing pure pleasures, bright hopes, oblivion of pain, and remembrances almost as pleasant as either.

It is a fatal error to imagine that it is useful to exaggerate the doctrine of morals. To do this, fails not to excite disgust towards the precepts inculcated. Men, that have been deceived upon these points, as soon as they judge for themselves, in their impatience to shake off the yoke of prejudices, are tempted to reject principles the most wise with those errors by which they have been misled. That we may be heard and followed, let us be true. Let us present, with force, the evils which the abuse of our faculties brings upon our short career. Let us avow with equal frankness, that we commit an egregious mistake, if we refuse, or neglect to draw from our faculties all the advantages in our power, to embellish life.

The doctrine of morals is a phrase that has been

often employed to designate the propagation of false and extravagant principles. For this phrase, which is too worn out, and of equivocal import, suppose we substitute a definition, which will clearly indicate the end, towards which, morals ought to be directed. Morals teach the art of happiness. If it be not so, the foundation of ethics is a mere matter of convention, either useless or dangerous.

Morals should be taught only as subservient to happiness. Austerity should be banished equally from the manner of teaching and from the matter that is taught. They are the useful teachers, whose tenderness of heart impels them rather to inspire virtue than to enjoin it; and whose brilliant imagination enables them to offer wise principles under such pleasant forms as charm the mind and awaken curiosity. To present a family struggling with every form of misfortune, and constantly opposing resignation or courage to each, is to offer the sublimest painting that it is possible to execute. Such a picture Goldsmith has given in his *Vicar of Wakefield*. The concurrence of genius and virtue could alone have conceived the idea.

The concurrent influence of public institutions and education would be necessary to render the general habits conformable to happiness. Books, the influence of which I certainly have not exagge-

rated, may be useful to men, raised by the discipline of their reason above the multitude. That man is happy, who knows how to add good books to the number of his friends, who often retires from the world to enjoy their peaceful and instructive conversation, and always brings back serenity, courage and hope.

Were the doctrine true, that it is impossible to increase the happiness or diminish the evils of life, it is not perceived that it would not still be necessary to follow my principles. Preach this discouraging doctrine to a good man, and you may afflict him, but will obtain no influence over his conduct. He will always strive to improve his condition, mitigate the sufferings that press upon him, and render men more compassionate and happy. Such noble efforts cannot be entirely lost. The pure intentions, the sincere wishes, which he forms for the good of his kind, give to his mind a pleasant serenity. It assures his own happiness even to think of the means of increasing that of others.

APPENDIX.

THE CHOICE OF A PROFESSION.*

THE considerate Knight of La Mancha would not dismiss his follower and friend to the government of Barataria, without a few more last words, and without arming him for his high functions with a copious homily of counsels and admonitions. Before I leave you to the stern encounter of the painful emergencies of life, to unravel its intricacies, and settle its innumerable perplexing and difficult alternatives, I do not mean to oppress your memory with the thousand and one particular directions, to meet every imaginable occurrence with the right mode of conduct. Innumerable cases of perplexity will be continually occurring,

* By the American editor, Timothy Flint.

that can only be settled by judgment and prudence.

I shall limit my counsels to a single one, on the right disposal of which, in a great measure, depends their character, success and happiness in life. I refer to the choice of a profession. On this subject, the first point to be consulted is our physical and mental temperament. That some are constituted for sedentary and inactive pursuits, others to beat the anvil, follow the plough, or mount the reeling mast with a firm step in the uproar of a tempest; some for the bar, others for the pulpit, and still others to be musicians, painters, poets or engineers, I consider a truth so universally and obviously taught by observation and experience, that I shall not deem it necessary to pause to prove it to such as would contest it. I know that there are those who contend that all minds are formed equal and alike; and that all the after differences result from education and circumstances. With them, Virgil and Byron had no constitutional aptitude to poetry, and the same training that gave Handel and Gluck their pre-eminence in music would have imparted to any other mind equal skill. According to their system, La Place and Zerah Colburn were no earlier or more strongly inclined to mathematics, than other

children. These sapient physiologists in descending to the animal tribes, ought to find, that web-footed animals had no natural aptitude for water, the canine tribes for animal food, and the ruminating, to feed on grass and vegetables. I shall leave those who hold this dogma to retain it unquestioned so far as I am concerned; and they will be obliged to leave me to mine: which is, that there are immense differences in the physical and mental constitution, which every enlightened parent discovers in his children, from the very dawn of their faculties; differences, which every intelligent instructor notes in his pupils, as soon as he becomes intimately acquainted with them; and which, to keen and close observation, distinguished more or less each individual in the immense mass of society. No matter how much alike these persons are reared and trained; the most striking diversities of endowment are often observed in members of the same family, reared and educated with all possible uniformity. This is, no doubt, a beautiful trait of that general impress of variety, which providence has marked upon every portion of the animate and inanimate creation. Nature has willed, that not only men should possess an untiring diversity of form, countenance and mind, but that not two pebbles on the shore, or insects

in the air, should be found precisely alike. The sign manual of the Creator on his works is a grand and infinite variety.

The physiological enquiry, whence these differences of temperament and aptitude arise, is one, which belongs to another subject; though I have no wish to conceal my belief, that the fundamental positions of phrenology are as immovably founded in fact, and as certainly follow from observation, as the leading axioms of any physical science. It is enough for my present purpose, that the order of every form of society calls for an infinite variety of aptitude, talent and vocation, and that nature has furnished the requisite variety of endowment, adequately to meet those calls.

The ancient system, still in use, goes on supposition, that all minds are originally alike; and that all children are equally fit to be trained for each of the vocations. Hence we see tailors at the anvil, and blacksmiths on the shopboard, numbers of excellent ploughmen generating prose, and sleeping at the bar and pulpit, and ingenious fiddlers ruined as engineers; in a word, all that ludicrous disarrangement and seeming play at cross purposes, in virtue of which, men, who would have been borne, by a strong current, to the first place in the profession for which nature designed them, become dull and useless in another. A great part

of the whole labour of instruction has thus been worse than thrown away. It has been the hard effort of poetic fiction, labouring the huge stone up an acclivity, to see it recoil and hear it thunder back again ; the effort to circumvent, and cross the purposes of nature.

It seems to me to be among the most responsible enquiries of a parent and conscientious instructor, what pursuit or calling is indicated for his child by his temperament and aptitude ? The boy, who, like Pope, even in childhood lisps in numbers, because the numbers come, will probably be found to have not only an ear for the peculiar harmony of rhythm, but an inventive mind, stored with images, and a quick eye to catch the various phases of nature and society. If placed under favourable circumstances, and judicious training, this child will become a poet, while ninety-nine in a hundred of those, who make verses, could by no forcing of nature ever rise higher than rhymers. Thus may be detected the embryo germs of temperament, endowment and character, which give the undeveloped promise of the future orator, lawyer, mathematician, naturalist, mechanician ; in a word, of the mind fitted to attain distinction in any walk in society. I am aware of the mistakes, which fond and doting parents are likely to make, in interpreting an equivocal, perhaps an accidental sally of the cherished

child, to be a sure proof of genius and endowment. No judicious and intelligent parent will be in much danger of being led astray by fondness so weak and misguided. Wherever real talent exists, it never fails to put forth continual indications. It is the elastic vigour of nature working at the root, to which no foolish partiality will be blind.

It is true, that nature, equally beneficent in what she has granted, and what she has withheld, forms the million for the common duties, and undistinguished employment; stamps them at once with a characteristic uniformity and variety; and sends them forth with specific adaptations, but not so strongly marked, as not to be mistaken with comparative impunity. Hence the ordinary pursuits and employments of life are conducted with general success, notwithstanding these smaller mistakes with regard to genius.

Not so in those rarer instances, where she has seen fit to stamp the clear and strong impress of peculiar endowment and aptitude, in which the embryo poet, painter, mathematician, naturalist, and orator are indicated by such unequivocal signs, as cannot easily be overlooked, or mistaken by any competent judge. Hence, in the biography of most of those who have truly and greatly distinguished themselves, we are informed that the most ordinary people about them were perfectly aware of the

harbingers of their future greatness. I am confident, that to keen and faithful observations, these harbingers are as palpable in the germ, as in the development. To mistake, in such a case, and not only to withdraw the youthful aspirant from the career to which nature beckons him, but to force him into one, in which every effort must be rowing against the stream, is to consign him to an Egyptian bondage, a slavery of the soul, by which many a spirit of firmer mould has been broken down, and lost to society, and others worse than lost, rendered the scourge and curse of all with whom their lot was cast.

Such as have arrived at a maturity of reason and years, so as to have the responsibility of the choice of a profession cast upon themselves, will infer, what are my views in regard to the first element by which they ought to be directed. It involves a previous question, for what pursuit or calling their temperament, faculties and powers best fit them? By long and close observation, pursued with a fidelity proportioned to its importance, by intent study of themselves, as called out by the changes of their health and prospects, the fluctuations of their spirits, their collisions with society, in all the contingencies that befall them, they can scarcely fail to form some conception of the peculiar cast of their powers, and the walk in life for which

their capabilities are best adapted. If they select wisely in this respect, habit and time will certainly render it the profession of their inclinations.

As soon as the mind begins to survey the professions, in regard to the honours, emolument, and success which they respectively offer, there is great danger, lest imagination, taking the place of reason, should look at the scene through a prism, and see all the chances of an illusive brilliancy of promise, which sober experience will be sure to disappoint. There are the immense promises of the law, alluring a crowd of aspirants and competitors, the greater portion of whom must fail to realize their expectations. There are the honours of the physician, binding him, by the strongest of all ties, to the confidence and affection of the families that employ him. He exercises the only profession that does not depend upon the caprice of fashion, or the vibrations of transient feeling. There is the ministry, with its time-honoured claims, its peculiar title to be admitted to the privacy of affection, sickness and death, and its paramount capability of the highest forms of that only eloquence that swells and softens the heart, by coming home to men's business and bosoms. There is the varied range, and the rapidly acquired fortunes of merchandise and commerce; the growing interest and importance of the new portico to a new order of

nobility, manufactures. There is agriculture, always seen to be the most satisfactory and useful of employments, and now rapidly coming to be viewed in the light of scientific investigation, and of a liberal pursuit. To adjust and settle the respective views, which the judgment and imagination will take of the chances of these various pursuits, and their contiguity to love, marriage, wealth and distinction, will be found to be no easy task. Sometimes one view will predominate, sometimes another; and the mind appears like a pendulum vibrating between them.

Reason presents one decisive view of the subject. All these chances, all these balances of advantage and disadvantage, have long since settled to their actual and natural level. If the law presents more tempting baits, and more rich and glittering prizes, over-crowded competition, heart-wearing scramble, difficulty of rising above the common level, into the sun and air of distinction, are appended, as inevitable weights in the opposing scale. The advantages and disadvantages of all the professions are adjusted by the level of society, exactly in the same way. He who is guided in this enquiry by common sense, will comprehend at a glance, that it is impossible, in the nature of things, to combine all the advantages and evade all the disadvantages of any one pursuit. No ex-

pectation more irrational and disappointing can be indulged, than to unite incompatible circumstances of happiness. The enquirer must reflect, that such a pursuit connects a series of fortunate chances; but there are the counterbalancing evils. Such another has a different series of both. It is folly to expect to form an amalgam of these immiscible elements. Reason can expect no more than that we unite in the calling, finally fixed upon, as many fortunate circumstances as possible, and avoid, as far as may be, its inconveniences and evils.

THE END.

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WILLIAM PENN'S TREATY WITH THE INDIANS, WHEN HE FOUNDED THE PROVINCE OF PENNSYLVANIA. William Darton and Son.

This is a copy of the celebrated picture by Benjamin West. It is drawn on stone, and is one of the best specimens of lithography which

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WILLIAM PENN'S TREATY WITH THE INDIANS, 1681.

William Darton and Son, London.

All West's Pictures have a distinguishing hardness and dryness; correct they certainly are, and sometimes highly effective; but the above-mentioned fault is perceptible in all. The original of this print is, like the rest, assailable at this point. The print before us is exceedingly soft and rich. The features of William Penn are marked by great keenness, and are in strong contrast to the eager looks of the Indians around. He looks as if he could overreach them. We always considered the forms of the native warriors in West's picture too full of flesh. Constant exercise and occasional privation should render them more spare and athletic.

The details of the picture are in West's best style.

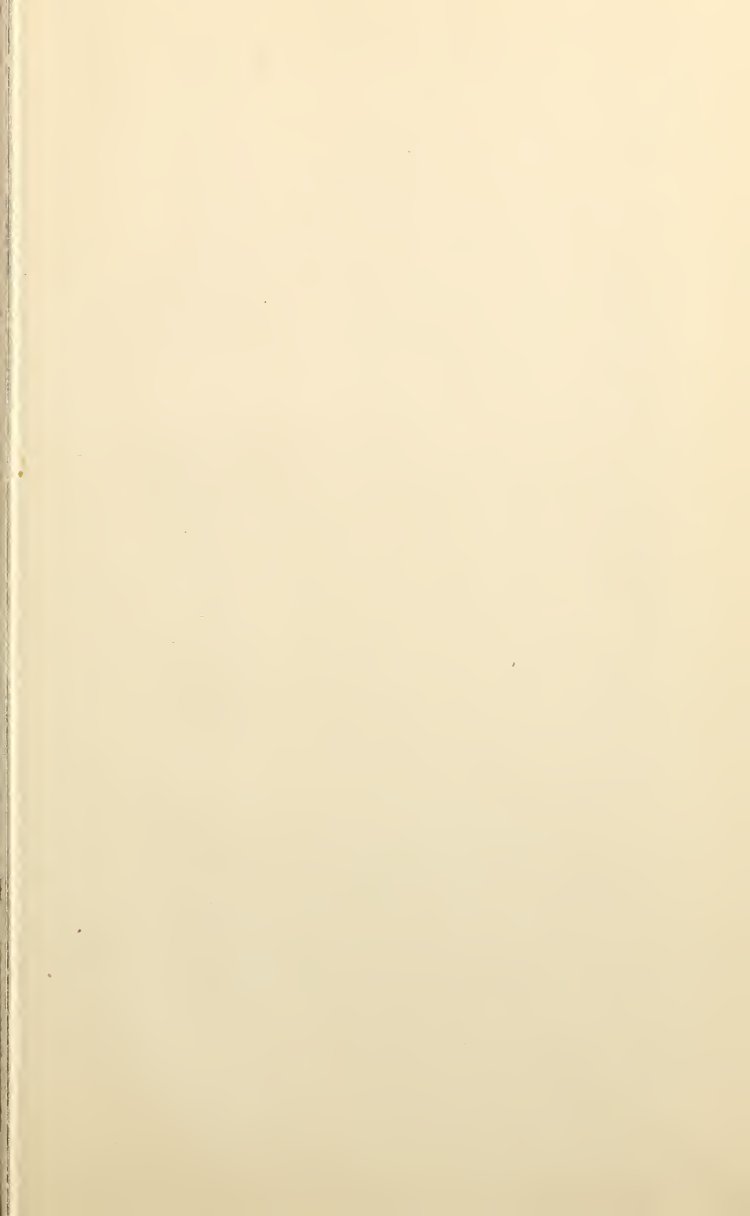
The unfinished houses, marking the state of the infant colony—the young Indians practising the bow—the ships in the distance—all convey distinct ideas of the action.

The fixed gaze of the Indian is like his fellow in the "Death of General Wolfe," who regards, with intense curiosity, the features of the expiring General, anxious to see how an European can die.

The manner in which the print has been lithographed is excellent. It is in Fairland's best style.—*True Sun*, April 24, 1835.

PENN'S TREATY WITH THE INDIANS.—Darton and Son, Holborn Hill, have just published a lithographic print from West's celebrated picture of the Treaty made by William Penn with the Indians, when he founded the Province of Pennsylvania in North America. It is one of the finest specimens of the art of drawing on stone that has yet appeared. It has all the firmness and clearness of an engraving on copper or steel, with the softness and delicate shading of an oil-painting. The foliage is peculiarly beautiful, and the varied expression of the principal group is admirably conveyed.—*Weekly Dispatch*, April 26, 1835.

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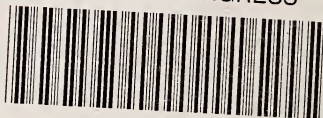
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